WOMEN IN WAR

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WOMEN IN WAR

CHAPTER I

The Amazons in ancient and modern times—Miss Beebe Beam—Señora Loreta Velasquez—Women who have served in the British Army, disguising their sex—Christian Davies—Hannah Snell—Mary Anne Talbot—Dr. James Barry, Inspector-General of Army Hospitals.

THE chronicler of woman's achievements in war will perhaps be expected to begin with the Amazons; but he will hardly be expected to go into details, or to waste space in disengaging history from myth. The balance of authoritative opinion inclines to the view that the Amazons did actually exist, but that there is no foundation for the statement that they cut off their right breasts in order that they might be better able to draw the bow. One hears of the existence of companies, regiments, and even armies of fighting women, in both the hemispheres and all the continents. The river Amazon itself derives its name from a tribe of women warriors whom the traveller Orellana believed to dwell upon its banks. There are well-accredited stories of the Amazons of Dahomey; and it is well known that Ranjeet Singh of Lahore had a bodyguard of a hundred

and fifty Amazons recruited from the loveliest girls procurable in Cashmere, Persia, and the Punjab. In Bantam, again, when it held a semi-independent position under the Dutch, the king had a royal troop of women soldiers who rode astride and carried muskets and lances, while Tien-Wang, the Celestial King of the Tae-Pings, had a bodyguard of a thousand woman soldiers.

And so forth. One could add many such instances if one cared to dig erudition from the Encyclopædias, and did not mind being wearisome; but it will be better to refer the curious to Mr. Guy Cadogan Rothery's most learned monograph, *The Amazons in Antiquity and Modern Times*. The one point which it is worth while to pause and make is this: that whereas organised groups of professional fighting women have been gradually eliminated by the progress of civilisation, the hour of need has often brought individual women into action. Sieges, in particular, have often called them to deeds which have covered them with glory.

In the annals of almost every country we find the story of some besieged city which the women have helped to defend. Plutarch, for instance, tells us of such a case in Greece. The women of Argos, he says, defended themselves so valiantly against the Spartans that they were allowed to dedicate a statue to the God of War, and permitted, as a symbolical distinction, to wear false beards on their wedding days. The city of Avila in Spain has a similar legend

of the repulse of the Saracens by the women. We all know how nobly the Maid of Saragossa acquitted herself during the historic siege of that city; and we all ought to know how Kenau Hasselaar and the three hundred women placed under her command helped to keep the Spaniards out of Haarlem. These stories shall more fully be related in the chapters to which they belong; but we may pause here to recall the prowess of the brave woman who helped to save Geneva from the Duke of Savoy on the night of the famous escalade.

The Duke had tried to rush the city treacherously, in the dark, in time of peace. Some of his Spanish mercenaries got over the walls, and ran through the streets shouting, "Ville gagnée! Tue! Tue." The citizens jumped out of bed, snatched up their weapons, and ran out to confront the intruders in their night-shirts. Their pastor, Simon Goulart, to whom we owe a jubilant description of the episode, writes that he himself would willingly have taken part in the fighting, in spite of his sacred office, if only he had been able to lay his hand on a suit of mail. Mme Royaume, when she heard the tumult, was in one of the upper chambers of a high house in a narrow street, making soup for the breakfast of her large family. She heard the call to arms, and she responded without waiting to look for a suit of mail. Opening the window wide, she sacri-

ficed her breakfast, and tossed out the saucepan,—boiling soup and all—on to the heads of the men-at-arms. The unexpected missile threw them into such dire confusion that the Genevans had easy work with them; and the saucepan is still preserved, together with the captured scaling ladders, in the Hôtel de Ville, as a perpetual memorial of the proudest day in Genevan history.

In that case, of course,—and in most of the cases with which we shall deal,—our women warriors have fought without making any mystery of their sex. In other cases—a considerable number of cases, too—we find women concealing their sex in order to be allowed to fight. The penetration of the disguise of such a Serbian heroine was one of the romantic incidents of the recent Balkan War; and the military history of almost every nation contains several anecdotes of the kind. In the United States, for instance, there is still living, or was still living until quite recently, a Miss Beebe Beam, who fought for her country against Spain. In order to reach the seat of war in the Philippines, she disguised herself as a cabin-boy; arriving at Manila, she disguised herself as a soldier, and followed the campaign for a twelvemonth; and then, according to the custom of her country, she was interviewed:

"I saw war," she said to the astonished pressman, "and I lived it, just as a soldier sees it and lives it; and, for what I saw and

learned, I do not feel I paid too much—even in the illness that came to me and the horrors of that voyage on the *City of Para*."

Curiosity, it would seem—a feminine characteristic, as we are sometimes told—was the lure in the case of Miss Beebe Beam; certainly there was no cause at issue which could inspire deep emotions. Another woman who fought, also in an American army, for the sheer joy of fighting, was Señora Loreta Velasquez, a lady of Cuban birth who had, in 1856, contracted a secret marriage with an American officer. She was, she has related, "perfectly wild about war"; and when the Civil War broke out she not only persuaded her husband to desert the Union Army and join the Confederates, but begged him to let her enlist as a private under his command. When he refused she put on a suit of his clothes and ran away to New Orleans. There she found a tailor who could keep a secret, had the clothes altered to suit her figure, procured a false moustache, and, thus equipped and embellished, raised a regiment of recruits and took them to her husband at Pensacola.

This time he not only submitted to his wife's whim, but taught her how to drill her men. His own life was not a long one—he was accidentally killed by the bursting of his carbine; but his death did not prevent Loreta from continuing under arms. Assuming the

name of Lieutenant Harry Buford, she fought at Bull Run, where the Federal enemy did most of the running; and we have her word for it that "no man on the field fought with more energy and determination" than she did. She also, more than once, crossed the Federal lines as a spy, and brought back valuable information; and when the war was over, and her military services were no longer in request, she went west and renewed the life of adventure as a Californian miner.

The British Army, it must be admitted, has never included a woman soldier of quite that dash and distinction; but there are records of women who have seen service alike in the Army, the Navy, and the Marines. The adventures of several of them are set forth in James Caulfield's *Portraits, Memoirs, and Characters of Remarkable Persons*, and have often been reproduced, in magazines and popular weekly papers. There is more of curiosity than of romance in the interest which they excite; and it will be sufficient to deal with them briefly, beginning with Mrs. Christian Davies, commonly called Mother Ross.

Mrs. Davies, *née* Cavanagh, was the daughter of a maltster of Dublin, who raised a troop of horse for James II, and was so disappointed at the result of the battle of the Boyne that he fell sick of a fever "which carried him off in a short time." His spirited daughter kept a public-house, and married the waiter, whose

name was Thomas Welsh. This Welsh, having gone out to pay a debt of fifty pounds to his brewer, got drunk and was kidnapped and carried off to Holland with a ship-load of recruits. He wrote home to say that, having reached the Netherlands without a penny in his pocket, he "was under the necessity, for support, to enlist as a private soldier." His wife, hearing the news, decided to sell her public-house, follow his example, and cross the seas to look for him.

She found him; but the circumstances of the meeting were not what her fancy had pictured: "To her inexpressible surprise and mortification, she recognised her husband caressing a Dutch woman who appeared to be congratulating him on his safe return from the late battles." Still, though she was disappointed, she behaved magnanimously, and "gave him a piece of gold, informing him, at the same time, he should always find in her an affectionate brother, but that he must not think of her as a wife, while she could remain concealed and the war lasted." So they parted "in a friendly way," but came together again in consequence of the discovery of Mrs. Welsh's sex by the surgeon who attended her for a wound which she received in the battle of Ramilies.

They were reconciled, and Mrs. Welsh resumed the female garb and became the regimental cook. Her husband having been killed in action shortly afterwards, she "found conso-

lation in the arms of one Hugh Jones, a grenadier," who became her second husband. He, too, fell in battle; and his widow then went back to Dublin, where she once more started a public house, "and by this, and by making pies, contrived to pick up a comfortable livelihood." There, a third soldier named Davies wooed and won her. As Serjeant Davies, he ultimately was admitted into Chelsea Hospital, where Mrs. Davies nursed him until she caught a cold and died of it, on July 7, 1739, being interred, with military honours, in the Hospital burial-ground.

Hannah Snell, whose name comes next on our list, adopted a martial career for the same reason as Christian Davies. Her husband had disappeared, and enlistment seemed the most hopeful way of looking for him. She did not succeed in finding him, but learnt that he had committed a murder and been executed. In the meantime, however, she had had various and painful experiences, receiving five hundred lashes for an offence which she had not committed, and a wound in the groin, from which she had to extract the bullet herself, in order that her secret might not be discovered. She was at Carlisle at the time of the Young Pretender's invasion, and was afterwards sent to India, where she distinguished herself in action in the Madras Presidency. It is related that she endeared herself to her messmates by washing and mending their linen; and the

end of her career was not unsatisfactory. She went on the stage and "sung several songs at the theatre in Goodman's Fields"—an indication that, even in those days, intelligent impresarios perceived that it might be profitable to exploit notoriety as well as talent.

Thirdly, there was Mary Anne Talbot, said to have been the youngest of the sixteen illegitimate children of Lord William Talbot, Steward of His Majesty's Household, and Colonel of the Glamorganshire Militia. Born in London, in 1778, she was disgracefully treated by her lover, Captain Essex Bowen, of the 82nd regiment of infantry. He took her to San Domingo, whither he had been ordered, in the disguise of a foot-boy, and, arriving at Port-au-Prince, caused her to be enrolled in the regiment as a drummer-boy, threatening to sell her into slavery if she did not acquiesce. As a drummer-boy, she took part in the siege of Valenciennes. Deserting from the Army, she joined the Navy as a powder-monkey, was with Lord Howe on the famous First of June, and was subsequently, for eighteen months, a prisoner of war in France. To her, as to Hannah Snell, it appeared that the theatre might afford fitting scope for her talents. Like Hannah Snell, she was given her chance—the sort of chance of which any novice would be glad. Covent Garden was one of her theatres; Juliet was one of her parts; but the ghost would seem to have walked with fitful irregularity:

"Finding this pursuit," she writes, "more pleasant than profitable, I was compelled to give it up, and solicit assistance towards my support from several respectable persons to whom I had made my adventures and sufferings known."

We will leave her soliciting, and turn to the case of Dr. James Barry, the woman who became an army-surgeon, and rose to be Inspector-General of Hospitals. She was buried at Kensal Green; and the inscription on her tomb-stone, which may still be read, runs as follows:

DR. JAMES BARRY,
INSPECTOR-GENERAL OF ARMY HOSPITALS.
DIED JULY 15, 1865.
AGED 71 YEARS.

That, as the dates show, is quite a modern story—modern enough for the record of services and promotions to be extracted from Hart's *Annual Army List*. The salient facts have, indeed, been copied from Hart's *Annual Army List* into the *Dictionary of National Biography*; and there is an anecdotal photograph of the doctor in Lord Albemarle's *Fifty Years of My Life*. Lord Albemarle met her, in his youth, at Cape Town; and this is what he writes:

"There was at this time at the Cape a person whose eccentricities attracted universal attention—Dr. James Barry, staff-surgeon to the garrison, and the Governor's medical adviser. Lord Charles (Somerset) described him to me as the most skilful of physicians, and the most wayward of men. He had lately been in professional attendance upon the Governor, who was somewhat fanciful about his health; but the Esculapius, taking umbrage at something said or done, had left his patient to prescribe for himself. I had heard so much of this capricious yet privileged gentleman that I had a great curiosity to see him. I shortly afterwards sat next to him at one of the regimental messes. In this learned pundit I beheld a beardless lad, apparently of my own age, with an unmistakably Scotch type of countenance — reddish hair, high cheek-bones. There was a certain effeminacy in his manner, which he seemed to be always trying to overcome. His style of conversation was greatly superior to that one usually heard at a mess-table in those days of *non*-competitive examination.

"A mystery attached to Barry's whole professional career, which extended over more than half a century. While at the Cape he fought a duel, and was considered to be of a most quarrelsome disposition. He was frequently guilty of flagrant breaches of discipline, and, on more than one occasion, was sent home under

arrest; but, somehow or other, his offences were always condoned at headquarters.

"In Hart's *Annual Army List* for the year 1865 the name of James Barry, M.D., stands at the head of the list of Inspector-Generals of Hospitals. In the July of that same year *The Times* one day announced the death of Dr. Barry, and next day it was officially reported to the Horse Guards that the doctor was a woman. It is singular that neither the landlady of her lodging nor the black servant who had lived with her for years, had the slightest suspicion of her sex. The late Mrs. Ward, daughter of Colonel Tidy, from whom I had these particulars, told me further that she believed the doctor to have been the legitimate granddaughter of a Scotch Earl, whose name I do not now give, as I am unable to substantiate the circumstances of my friend's surmise, and that the *soi-disant* James Barry adopted the medical profession from an attachment to an army-surgeon who has not been many years dead."

There is much here which cannot be tested; but there are one or two facts which it is possible to add. Dr. Barry's antagonist in the duel was a young aide-de-camp named Cloete, afterwards Sir Josiah Cloete. On one of her voyages home she was required, to her great inconvenience, to share a state-room with a certain Lieutenant Rogers; but she knew how to deal with the

difficulty. Every night he had to go to bed, before she did, in the berth above her, and remain there; every morning he had to leave the state-room, whatever agonies of sea-sickness he might be suffering, while she dressed. A savage dog that she had with her saw to it that the injunctions were obeyed.

CHAPTER II

The Amazons of France—The real Mme Sans-Gêne—Bernadotte's admiration of her—Her ultimate marriage to a gendarme—Virginie Ghesquière—Angélique Brûlon—Marie Schellinck—Liberté Barrau—Félicité and Théophile Fernig, the heroines of Jemmappes—Félicité's romantic marriage—Théophile's secret sorrow.

THE French Army, like the English, boasts of its heroines as well as its heroes; and the attitude of French writers towards women warriors has always been very different from that of Mr. James Caulfield. He viewed them as eccentrics; the French have rejoiced over them as paragons. Their exploits belong, in France, to the romance of war rather than to its odd and abnormal detail; there is an element of gallantry as well as of curiosity in the admiration accorded to them all, from Jeanne d'Arc down to the humblest of the *vivandières*.

Jeanne d'Arc, however, must wait; and the *vivandières* must also wait. We are speaking now only of the women who have put on uniform and marched or ridden in the ranks; and our first heroine shall be Mme (or more properly Mlle) Sans-Gêne. The name is familiar on account of Sardou's play and Mme Réjane's interpretation of it; but that drama, though

dramatic, is not true to fact. Sardou's Mme Sans-Gêne is the wife of Marshal Lefêbvre, whom Napoleon made Duke of Dantzig—a promoted washerwoman, with a rasping tongue but a good heart, who came to Court, bringing with her the unpolished speech of the laundry, and a disconcerting odour, as it were, of soap-suds; but her performances do not fall within the scope of the present inquiry. The name Sans-Gêne, however, which Sardou took for his play, was a real name—or, at all events, a real *nom de guerre*; and our business here is with the brave woman who bore it.

She was Thérèse Figueur of Lyon, where she was born in 1774. Her father was a Girondin—one of those who defended Lyon against the Convention in 1793, when it was decreed that the city should be razed to the ground, and a pillar erected on the ruins, with the inscription: *Lyon rebelled against the Republic; Lyon is no more.* There was much guillotining, and even more fusillading, for Fouché had said that the Republic must "march to Liberty over corpses." Carlyle has drawn us a vivid picture of two hundred and nine men "marched forth over the river to be shot in mass, by musket and cannon, in the promenade of the Brotteaux." The Girondin Figueur was to have been one of them—or perhaps one of the earlier batch of seventy victims whose bodies were flung into the Rhône; but he escaped, taking his daughter with him—both of them disguised in Repub-

lican uniforms—and Thérèse made the assurance of her safety doubly sure by joining a regiment of dragoons.

There never was much mystery about her sex; they called her Mlle Sans-Gêne, in fact, because she seemed so little embarrassed by it; but she gave her proofs and therefore was permitted to remain in the Army when other women, similarly situated, were turned out of it. She was under Dugommier at the siege of Toulon; and it was there that she was first brought into relation with that "olive-complexioned officer of artillery" who was presently to be Emperor of France. He sent her to the guard-room. It was her boast, in later years, that she called him an "ugly little beast" for doing so; and, from the fact that she did so with impunity, it seems reasonable to infer that he was one of those who knew her to be a woman.

At any rate, he knew it later, and then took sufficient interest in her to remove her from the Army and attach her to the service of the Empress Joséphine. For whatever reason, she and Joséphine did not get on very well together; and she was transferred to the service of the wife of Marshal Augereau, to whom she acted as private secretary. In that establishment, too, however, she failed to give satisfaction, being addicted to rough practical jokes more suitable to a barrack-room than to the house of a Marshal of France, and making mischief by her hints that the Marshal was unfaithful

to his wife. It was thought better that she should leave; so she returned to the Army and took part in the battles of Ulm and Austerlitz, and it was during this period of her service that she attracted the attention of Bernadotte. She tells us that Bernadotte was in love with her, but that she was not in love with him; but that story of rejected addresses need not detain us.

"My motto," she writes, "has always been that a heart is the proper price to be paid for a heart"; and, in the end, she gave her heart, together with her hand, to a gendarme named Sutter, having by that time attained the mature age of forty-four.

It was a rule of the service that a gendarme must not marry a woman without a dowry; but that regulation was specially abrogated in her favour. The marriage of a gendarme to an ex-dragoon was felt to be so unique an event that the regulations of the service must not be allowed to stand in the way of it. It seems to have been a happy marriage, though poverty ultimately compelled Mme Sutter to seek admission to the Hospice des Ménages. She was admitted to it in 1839; and she died there, some twenty years later, at the great age of eighty-five. The one sorrow of her life is said to have been her failure to win the red ribbon of the Legion of Honour.

She probably grieved the more because that military distinction was actually awarded to

three other women soldiers of her period; Virginie Ghesquière, Angélique Brûlon, and Marie Schellinck, whose careers and records we may briefly run over. Virginie Ghesquière is perhaps the most interesting of them.

Mlle Ghesquière was of Délémont near Lille, and she entered the army as a "substitute." Her brother, who should have been recruited, had no taste for fighting, so she took his place, disguising herself in a suit of his clothes, was promoted to the rank of sergeant for saving an officer's life at Wagram, and was subsequently mentioned in the Order of the Day for distinguished services under Junot in Portugal. There is a song about her, once popular though now forgotten, set to the tune of *Partant pour la Syrie*. One may cite a few stanzas, without committing oneself to any opinion as to its merits as poetry :

Une jeune guerrière,
Pour avoir du renom,
Veut partir pour son frère
Dans l'habit de garçon.

D'une ardeur martiale,
Elle vole au combat,
Et partout se signale
Comme un brave soldat.

La guerrière intrépide
Que l'amour fraternel
Sert en tout lieu de guide
Sauva son colonel.

Par une maladie
Son sexe est reconnu.
Soldats, de Virginie
Imitez la vertu !

Angélique Brûlon was not less famous. Born in 1771, the daughter and afterwards the widow of a soldier, she served from 1792 to 1799, was remarked for her gallantry in the defence of Corsica, was there wounded, and was afterwards admitted to the Invalides ; but she was not forgotten there. In 1822 she was promoted, being then fifty-one years of age, to the rank of lieutenant on the retired list, on the proposal of General de Latour-Maubourg ; and, as she did not die until 1859, there must be sight-seers still living to whom she has been pointed out, swaggering innocently about, as an octogenarian, in her lieutenant's uniform.

And then comes Marie Schellinck, who was Belgian by birth, but French in virtue of her military services. Born at Ghent, in 1757, she fought in no fewer than twelve campaigns, was wounded at Jemmappes, Austerlitz, and Jena, and mentioned in the Order of the Day for gallantry at Arcola. She retired on her pension in 1808, and took up her residence in her native town. In 1811, when Napoleon came to Ghent, she had the honour of being presented to the Empress Marie-Louise ; but the presents which Marie-Louise took the opportunity of giving her were suited to her sex and not inspired by any recollection of her feats of arms.

They consisted of a silk dress, a brooch, and a pair of earrings.

These, it will have been observed, are very different stories from those related of Hannah Snell, Mary Anne Talbot, and Christian Davies —more dramatic and more spectacular. The heroines of them have been the objects of enthusiasm, not of mere gaping curiosity, and have consequently been able to hold their heads as high in private life as on the stricken field. One finds the note struck yet again in the story of Liberté Barrau, who fought by her husband's side in the war with Spain in 1794. She burst with him into Spanish entrenchments—the third soldier to enter them—and, after the fighting was over, she addressed him in the inflated language of the period. "Ah! it is sweet, after the victory is gained," she exclaimed, "to press you to my bosom and dress your wounds." Whereupon the *Recueil des Actions héroïques*, published by order of the Convention, comments:

"In thus lavishing upon him the attentions of conjugal affection, she demonstrates that she has in no way renounced the virtues of her own sex while displaying those generally regarded as the special appanage of the other."

That is the true, characteristic utterance of France: the voice which one would expect to hear in the country which produced Jeanne d'Arc, La Grande Mademoiselle, Mme de La

Rochejacquelein, the Duchesse de Berry, and Mlle Juliette Dodu—of all of whom we shall have to speak. One hears the voice louder than anywhere else perhaps in the story of Félicité and Théophile Fernig, those Amazons of Jemmappes, whose exploits have been celebrated by the lyric pen of Lamartine in his *Histoire des Girondins*, and whose memory is kept alive by a monument recently erected on the field on which they acquitted themselves so gallantly.

Félicité was twenty-two, and Théophile was seventeen. Their father was some sort of a clerk in the public service, and also a traveller, a philosopher, and a patriot. He had visited Voltaire at Ferney; he was reckoned *homme sensible*, as became a disciple of Rousseau; his fellow citizens had elected him to commissioned rank in the National Guard. He was the father of five children—a son who was in the army, and four daughters who would have liked to be in it. Félicité had distinguished herself in the competitions of some local Society of Archers, and been nominated to the honorary office of Queen of that Society; and when the Austrians, who were trying to put Louis XVI back on his throne, were at Mons and Tournai, the thunder of the guns reached the girls' ears in the village of Mortagne in French Flanders. It was their opportunity; and Félicité and Théophile were old enough to seize it.

They began as what we should call Girl Guides. Their father had often taken them with him

when he went shooting; and they knew every inch of the country. So they offered their services, and showed the French sharp-shooters how to lure the enemy into ambuscades—all this, at first, without their father's knowledge:

"Their secret," writes Lamartine, "was long kept loyally. M. de Fernig, when he returned to his domicile in the morning, and discussed the night's exploits over the breakfast-table, never suspected that his own daughters had been in the forefront of the fray with the sharp-shooters, and had, more than once, rescued him from danger."

But the secret was revealed at last. One day, after the fighting had been more severe than usual, and the combatants were worn out with their exertions, the elder Fernig saw a strange sight: Félicité and Théophile, armed with rusty sabres and antique blunderbusses, their faces blackened with powder, lying fast asleep in the open, their heads supported by their knapsacks:

"It was an indescribable scene," Théophile has recorded. "Affection, alarm, and joy found successive expression on my good father's countenance. He came to us with open arms, and pressed us to his heart, stammering out: 'Ah me! Chips of the old block! I recognise my blood.'"

The rest was simple. There was no longer any need for mystery. The sisters were presented to Dumouriez—"a happy encounter," he writes, "and one calculated to stimulate the courage of my men." He gave them uniforms and horses, and they proved themselves worthy of the gift. "The Fernig girls," General Beurnonville reported to the Convention, "were very capable of killing their men"; and there is unanimous testimony to the effect that they were as modest and well-conducted as they were brave. "They were even more remarkable," Dumouriez writes, "for the propriety of their behaviour than for their reckless daring"; and the Commissaries of the Convention, sent to inspect the army, declared that they found them "respected and honoured in the midst of an army of young men."

Moreover, the record of their valiant deeds is particular as well as general. Félicité rode in a charge by the side of the Duc de Chartres, afterwards Louis-Philippe, and saved a young Belgian officer, François van der Wallen, from the sabres of the Uhlans; Théophile brought a Hungarian major back to the French camp as her prisoner. All France would have rung with their praises if they had not made the mistake of putting too much faith in Dumouriez. He was their king of men, and, when he turned traitor, they concluded that whatever so great a man did must be right, and crossed the frontier with him: an error of judgment for which

they paid the penalty with a wandering life and a period of destitution. One hears of Félicité keeping a small lottery office at Brussels, while Théophile, whom her younger sister Louise had joined, went round the village fairs, hawking combs and other trifling toilet articles; but that occupation proved unprofitable, and they moved on.

A poor end, it will be thought; but happily it was not the end—there is a romance to follow. We have seen how Félicité saved a young Belgian officer's life, killing two Uhlans in order to do so. The young Belgian was wounded, and was laid up for a long time in the military hospital at Brussels. When he recovered he vowed that he would devote his life to searching for the woman who had saved him. Whether she was in Brussels, unknown to him, at the time, is uncertain: at all events, he searched for her elsewhere, wandering through Germany, and other northern countries. At last he discovered her, in a remote refuge, somewhere in Denmark, brought her back to Belgium, and married her. Four children were born of the marriage; and two of them at least grew up to do well in the world. One of them became Honorary Counsellor at the Douai Court of Appeal; another Inspector-General of the Belgian prisons.

Of Théophile's subsequent career one knows less; but there is reason to believe that she too had her romance, though it was not a happy

one. There exists a letter of hers, addressed, in 1801, to one of her cousins, an officer of dragoons :

" My heart, dearest, is not a heart of bronze. It felt keenly, though it was stoically firm ; and it has been the victim of its resolution. Five years ago I swore to renounce, and also swore that I would never love again."

No more than that, of which we may make what we like. It proves, at any rate—what many of our stories may prove—that the heart of a woman warrior is not necessarily coated with triple brass ; though we need not conclude that Théophile died of love because she died young. Her secret, whatever it may have been, is buried with her in her tomb, which is at Brussels ; but she and her sister now have their joint monument at Jemmappes.

CHAPTER III

The *Vivandières*—Heroines of the retreat from Moscow—Heroines of the war of 1870–71—Annette Drevon—Jeanne Bonnemère—Mme Jarrethout, the Mother of the Volunteers—Louise de Beaulieu.

JUST as the French delight to see in the woman warrior a heroine who does not cease to be tender and virtuous because she is strong and of a good courage, so they are always eager to acclaim the romance of war in stories of the endurance and valiant indifference to danger of their picturesque *vivandières*. They call them *cantinières* nowadays,—*vivandières* is an eighteenth-century word; but it is only the name that has changed. The office remains; the duties are still pretty much what they were; the standard of intrepidity has not been lowered. The *cantinière* with whom an officer remonstrated for coming up under a heavy fire with her refreshments, and who reproached the officer, in her turn, for wishing to deprive the boys of their drinks at the hour when they stood in greatest need of them, dates from no further back than the Franco-German War, and is admiringly remembered as a model.

Larousse, in his great Encyclopædia, may

chaff the *cantinière*, as Sir William Gilbert, in *H.M.S. Pinafore*, chaffed dear little Buttercup, the bumboat woman. He finds her, in fact, unfeminine—unsexed; he tells the story of the *cantinière* who, being asked how many children she had, passed the question on to her husband, with the scornful remark that she, for her part, was too seriously occupied to have time to attend to such homely details. But the French soldier knows better; and the French civilian accepts the soldier's verdict. From the time of Mère Belgrade, who earned her sobriquet at the siege of the Serbian capital in 1717, many and many a *cantinière* and *vivandière* has had her name inscribed upon the roll of honour. Bonaparte himself, in his first Italian campaign, paid signal homage to one of them, hanging a gold chain about her neck as a token of his appreciation of the courage with which she had plunged into the Tagliamento and rescued a drowning grenadier. When the history of the *vivandières* comes to be written—and one can imagine few pleasanter occupations for a literary officer on the retired list—the mine of anecdote will be found to be rich in golden deeds.

Here and there, no doubt, a story will crop up more suitable to comic opera than to military history. A story of that kind, related in the *Memoirs of the Duchesse d'Abrantès*, constitutes one of the minor episodes of Bonaparte's campaign in Egypt. The heroine of it—if heroine

be the word—was a *cantinière*, the wife of a sergeant, whom the Mamelukes caught in a garden, where she was eating figs, and carried off into captivity in Syria. The sergeant appealed to the general to appeal to the chivalry of the enemy to compel the restoration of his stolen wife. Bonaparte consented, and opened negotiations, with the result that it was agreed that the *cantinière* should, if she desired it, be exchanged for a number of Arab prisoners whom the French had taken. But the *cantinière* did not desire to be exchanged, and sent a message to say so. She was very happy, she said, in a Pasha's harem, and she proposed to remain in it; so there was nothing for Bonaparte to do but to shrug his shoulders and admit himself beaten.

That, obviously, is an anecdote belonging to the lighter side of the subject. One prefers the stories which show the *cantinière* as devoted wife and mother; and one may take two typical stories of that kind in the annals of the great retreat from Moscow.

The heroine of one of them, the wife of a drummer in the 7th regiment of Infantry, had the misfortune to fall ill during the occupation of Moscow. Her husband procured a horse and cart for her, and marched beside her while she drove as far as Smolensk. At Smolensk, however, the horse collapsed, and was cut up and eaten by the starving soldiers. No other horse could be procured, for the few which then

remained were wanted for the artillery. It seemed as if the *cantinière* would have to be abandoned to the tender mercies of the enemy; but the drummer would not have it so. "No, no," he said. "She wouldn't desert me, and I am not going to desert her. As there are no more horses, I shall draw the cart myself." He harnessed himself to it, and dragged it through the snow, all the way from Smolensk to Vilna. But that was all that he could do. At Vilna the Cossacks came up; and drummer and *cantinière* surrendered themselves together as their prisoners.

A striking story that; but still more striking is the story of the *cantinière* of the 33rd.

We know nothing of her husband—perhaps she was a widow, for that terrible war made many widows. At any rate, she was a mother with one child—a daughter just six months old. A mother, too, of whom all mothers everywhere will be proud! Whatever happened, she vowed, she would bring her baby safely back to France; so she wrapped the infant in furs and marched with the soldiers, carrying it in her arms. She could not nurse it; and there was no milk to be had. There was nothing for it but to devise a new kind of infant's food—a sort of paste made of the blood of dead horses, and held to her body to be warmed by the heat. Incredible though it may seem, that noisome mixture kept the child alive.

Twice in the course of that awful journey the mother lost her child, putting it down for a moment while she rested, and then separated from it by the sudden alarm of a Cossack charge, but each time she found it again. The first time it was lying in a field; the second time she found that some good Samaritan had placed it in a bed in one of the ruined houses of a burnt-out village. She rescued it, and went on to the hardest of all her trials—the passage of the Beresina, under the Russian fire.

There were two pontoon bridges, but these were giving way beneath the weight of an army which had become a mob. Our *cantinière*, however, caught a stray horse, mounted it, and set out to swim the frozen river, down which the ice-floes were swirling. The exhausted beast sank so far under her weight that only its head was above water; and its rider, too, was almost completely submerged. Neither her courage, however, nor her resourcefulness failed her. With one hand she held her child aloft; in the other she gripped a sabre with which she kept off the floating blocks of ice. And so, at last, she reached the bank with her burden, while thousands of unencumbered men were perishing all around her; and so to safety, without any further trouble—without, it is said, having so much as caught a cold in the head as the result of her terrible ordeal.

An amazing example, truly, of hardihood and resolution, and only one among many such examples, though perhaps the most notable of them. One regrets that the names of the heroines have been lost, though their deeds have been remembered; but when we pass to the war of 1870–71—a time when records were more carefully and exactly kept—we still find the *cantinières* of the French army exhibiting all the old intrepidity. Stories of their nerve and devotion abound in the books of personal reminiscences which supplement the formal histories; and we may select a few of them, almost at random, beginning with the story of Annette Drevon of the 32nd regiment of the line.

Annette was an old campaigner, a veteran among *cantinières*. She had served with the Zouaves in Italy, and gained her decoration on the field of Magenta, where she had saved a flag from capture, running through the body the two Austrians who had tried to take it. Now she was at Thionville; and Thionville had to surrender. The French garrison was despatched to a German prison; and Hessians, Bavarians, and Wurtembergers swaggered in the streets in their place. Annette was not the woman to remove her red ribbon in the presence of the victorious enemy; she wore it as usual when she walked abroad. A burly Bavarian thought it funny to plant himself in front of her on the pavement and laugh in her

face. Annette passed him without a word; and then he gave tongue and insulted her. "Coward!" cried Annette; and the Bavarian drew his bayonet. But Annette was too quick for him; her revolver was drawn first, and she blew his brains out.

Of course she was quickly seized, disarmed, and taken before a court-martial. The court condemned her to be shot; and shot she would have been had not Prince Frederick Charles intervened and pardoned her, and so enabled her to end her days in a peaceful civilian calling. She became a market woman—one of the most highly esteemed of those *dames de la halle* who give colour and interest to Parisian life. For years she was to be seen, on *fête* days, at the *Halles Centrales*, presiding over the sale of vegetables with the cross of honour pinned to her breast, and receiving the congratulations of innumerable friends.

Another interesting case is that of Jeanne Bonnemère, another veteran. Visitors to Paris have seen her in comparatively recent times, making and selling bouquets in a small florist's shop at one of the entrances to the Louvre. She, too, wore orders on her bosom,—the Turkish Cross of the Medjidie, as well as the Crimean and Italian medals. Her first decoration had been won at the battle of the Tchernaya, where she had received a bayonet wound while rushing to the rescue of a French officer whom she had seen fall. She had left

the service in 1867; but the invasion brought her back to it—a woman, by that time, fairly well advanced in years. She was at Metz; and after Metz had fallen, she reported herself at Orleans.

At Orleans she heard that the Prefect had despatches of the first importance which he wished to send to Paris. Forthwith she waited on him, and volunteered to carry them. "I'm an old woman," she said. "The Prussians will hardly suspect me. I'm more likely to get through than a man." The Prefect accepted her offer, and entrusted her with one copy of the despatches, sending two other copies separately by other messengers. The two men were caught and shot out of hand at Villeneuve Saint-Georges. Jeanne Bonnemère was also caught, told that she was known to be carrying despatches, and threatened with instant death if she did not produce them; but she showed no sign of fear. "I have no despatches. If you disbelieve me, search me," she said; and they searched her and found nothing. She had rolled the despatch up into a ball, chewed it to a pulp, and swallowed it: a difficult meal, but Jeanne Bonnemère, as we have seen, recovered from the indigestion, and ended her days tranquilly as a florist.

And then there was Mme Jarrethout, known indifferently as the Mother of the Volunteers, and the *cantinière* of Chateaudun, where she not only served out refreshments, but gave first

aid to the wounded, and helped to bury the dead. She lost her cart at Chateaudun, but continued to follow the campaign on foot, was taken prisoner, and escaped, served at Coulmiers and Le Mans, saved the lives of a Major of Mobiles and a *franc-tireur* who afterwards became one of the Paris Municipal Councillors, and was finally accorded her decoration for "exceptional courage and devotion" by a decree of July 13, 1880. And then—last but not least—there was Mme Louise de Beaulieu: a volunteer and a woman of means.

Somehow or other Mme de Beaulieu's case was overlooked at the hour when recompenses were distributed. General de Cissey had, in fact, sent her the Military Medal; but, through some oversight, the distinction had not been officially confirmed. She was actually brought up before the magistrates for wearing decorations to which she was not entitled, and she was reduced to poverty. France awoke to the fact when it read the following announcement in the newspapers:

"Mme de Louise Beaulieu, who lost her right arm as the result of a wound received on December 2, 1870, decorated with the Military, and with eight other medals for saving life, is hereby authorised by the Prefect of Police to distribute prospectuses in the public streets. Tradesmen who are willing to avail themselves

of her services are requested to write to her at 63 Rue Quincampoix."

To such depths can officialism be dragged down by its red tape. It was a case for the intervention of a journalist to teach the Government its duty; and Victor Hugo's friend, Auguste Vacquerie of the *Rappel*, took the matter up. "Who," he asked, "is Mme Louise de Beaulieu?" and he answered his own question by a simple, but eloquent, statement of her services.

"In 1870 she was thirty years of age. She was well off, and might have stayed by her own fireside. Instead of doing so, she enlisted as a *cantinière* in the Legion of the Friends of France. She took part in eight battles, helping to collect the wounded under fire.

"She narrowly escaped being shot. By the Prussians? No, by the French. On October 13, at Saint-Denis, a corporal, thinking that she looked too distinguished for a *cantinière*, assumed that she was a spy and dragged her to a miserable cellar in the Rue Compoise. She was kept in it for four days, and only taken out of it to be led to the place of execution, where she was tied to a post, with her hands fastened behind her back. A soldier stepped forward to bandage her eyes; she would not have it, but claimed to be allowed herself to give the order to fire. She was about to give it when an officer of mobiles thrust him-

self between her and the firing party. A few days later she received the bronze cross of the French Society for the Aid of the Wounded on Land and Sea.

"In the same month, we find her again at the skirmish of Nanterre, and then at three battles at Bourget, and in November at Bry-sur-Marne, and at Villiers, where her conduct was thus remarked upon, on the following day, in the columns of *L'Ami de la France :*

"'Our *cantinière,* Mme Louise de Beaulieu, gave proofs of a courage beyond all praise. In defiance of the order of the major, she remained in the firing line, and brought in twenty-five wounded, whom she picked up under fire and took to the ambulance.'

"On December 2 she was at Champigny ; and it was there that she got her wound in the right arm. The wound did not prevent her from continuing her work of courage and humanity. During the fights at Grospay and on the plain of Drancy she carried the wounded in her left arm, affixed the bandages with her uninjured hand, and used her teeth to help make the ligatures.

"During that terrible night of December 2, after a most trying day, Mme de Beaulieu, overcome with fatigue, covered with mud and blood, fell asleep on a truss of straw, with her feet in the snow ; when she woke, her left foot was frost-bitten. On January 19, however, she

was back again at her work, lifting up the wounded with her one remaining arm, making them cling to her, with their arms round her neck, and, in spite of the agony which she suffered in her left foot, carrying them to places of safety.

"Do you think it right now—do you think it tolerable—that a woman with nine medals should be reduced to distributing prospectuses in the public streets?

"But she had money, you will tell me. Yes, she had money before the war. But she spent it nobly. 'More than one surviving witness,' says a pamphlet which I have before me, 'can testify to her generosity; more than twenty thousand francs of her fortune went in brandy, tobacco, bread, and horses for our soldiers.'

"In May 1871 she organised an ambulance at her own expense.

"There is no need to insist—the facts speak for themselves. Some newspapers have taken the patriotic initiative of proposing that Mme Louis de Beaulieu shall be set up in one of our national tobacco-shops. We hope, at all events, that the Committee of the Chamber of Deputies, which has the matter in hand, will perceive that here is a debt which the country ought to pay."

Which debt, of course, the country did pay when its attention was drawn to it.

And here our chapter on the valiant deeds of the *cantinières* may close. It remains, before we leave the Franco-German War, to speak of the most famous of all its heroines—Juliette Dodu, the telegraph operator; but she must have a chapter to herself.

CHAPTER IV

The courageous exploit of Mlle Juliette Dodu, of the Telegraph Service, in the Franco-German War—Mlle Wipper and Mlle Meyer of the same Service.

JULIETTE DODU was a Creole from Réunion, and the daughter of a naval surgeon—a girl not yet quite twenty years of age. She was an operator in the Telegraph Service, stationed at Pithiviers, about twenty-five miles from Orleans, between that town and Paris, at the time when the seat of the Provisional Government, formed to direct the defence while Paris was besieged, was at Tours. General Vinoy, who had approached Sedan too late for the battle, had fallen back on Paris. The nucleus of the first Army of the Loire was being got together at Vierzon, Bourges, and Nevers. The flying clouds of German cavalry, scouring the country for information, had necessarily to take Pithiviers on their way.

The first Uhlans were seen there on September 20, 1870; the first squadron of them entered the little town on the following day, and promptly stationed sentries outside the door of the telegraph office. Mlle Dodu had just time to send the news of their arrival to Tours

and Orleans ; then she walked out, through the midst of the enemy, with her Morse apparatus hidden under her cloak. The Prussians withdrew, returned and cut the wires, and then retired a second time. Mlle Dodu, thanks to her forethought in preserving her apparatus, was able at once to re-establish communications and inform the Prefect of Orleans of what had happened. She had been specially charged to send all the military news that she could get—and she sent plenty of it—with great diligence.

On September 27, however, the Prussians entered Pithiviers for the third time. Mlle Dodu had just time to telegraph that they were entering the town, and to destroy all the documents which it was undesirable to let them see ; then she once again made her escape, carrying her apparatus with her as before. Officers entered the office, made the most careful search, but discovered nothing which was of any use to them. Then they proceeded once again to cut the wires ; but one wire happily escaped their observation. Mlle Dodu was able to use it, unknown to them, by night ; and despatch after despatch continued to be sent from Pithiviers to Orleans.

Presently the fighting began. The Germans defeated General de la Motterouge, and occupied Orleans ; and then Mlle Dodu succeeded in establishing, with the help of an inspector named Perceval, direct telegraphic communication with Montargis. General d'Aurelle de

Paladines next defeated the Germans, and reoccupied Orleans, whence he came on to Pithiviers, which the Germans had to evacuate. Mlle Dodu, of course, continued her service, which was now heavier than ever : on one occasion she remained on duty for seventy-two hours without a chance of sleep. But Metz had now capitulated ; and Prince Frederick Charles's army was approaching by forced marches. It was the turn of the French to evacuate Pithiviers, the turn of the Germans to reoccupy it. Once more Mlle Dodu was left to do what she could in the enemy's country : what she was able to do we are about to see.

This time the enemy had brought military telegraphists, equipped with everything required for the repair of broken lines. Among other things they brought two coils of wire which they deposited in the waiting-room adjoining the telegraph office. Mlle Dodu and her mother saw the coils of wire in the waiting-room ; but they did not leave them there. They carried them off to their bedroom and hid them under their mattress, where they remained until the conclusion of the war ; with the result that other wires had to be sent for before the Germans could establish telegraphic communication with their base. It was a good beginning, but the sequel was to be better ; and the great *coup* was, as it curiously happened, inspired by Prince Frederick Charles himself.

He saw Mlle Dodu sitting at her bedroom window, and he saluted her. It seemed to her that he saluted with an air of insolence; and she banged the window in his face, and told a German officer what she thought of his behaviour. The news of her protest was reported to the Prince, who valued his reputation for courtesy and desired to recover it. He made a point, therefore, of passing the window and saluting again—as ceremoniously, this time, as if he had been paying the tribute of his homage to a princess of the blood. In that way there grew up a sort of an acquaintance between him and Mlle Dodu; and presently they had speech with each other in rather exciting circumstances.

It was on the day of the battle of Beaune-la-Rolande. The German tenure of Pithiviers was not yet quite secure; the French were pressing their troops hard. Prince Frederick Charles was himself directing the German operations from the telegraph office, whence he despatched an urgent message for reinforcements of artillery. Mlle Dodu was present at the scene, and understood what was being done; and her patriotic anguish was too much for her. She broke out with indignant words:

"What!" she exclaimed. "The French telegraph sending those orders to our enemies! Good God! And to think that there is no Frenchman to whom it has occurred to cut the line!"

The words were shouted, not muttered. Prince Frederick Charles knew French. He turned to Mlle Dodu with a significant smile, and spoke to her in French :

" You could be a very dangerous young woman, mademoiselle. It is very fortunate for us that not all our enemies have your courage and your presence of mind."

That was the suggestion which once more set Mlle Dodu thinking. She could be dangerous, could she ? She asked nothing better. If she could be dangerous, she would. Her courage should not fail her ; all that she wanted was an idea, an inspiration, an opportunity.

The battle continued to rage ; and the French attack was rolled back, albeit Captain Brugère—afterwards General Brugère of the presidential household—captured and carried off a German gun. The Germans returned to Pithiviers, victorious but starving—reduced, with the passion of their race for fat, to making soup of Mme Dodu's tallow candles. At last they fell asleep, and Juliette Dodu had her inspiration, and saw her chance. Not hers to drive a tent-peg treacherously through an enemy's head, like Deborah—she knew a better way. She had her professional skill, and she had her Morse apparatus, which she had hidden ; one of the wires passed close beside her window. It was a simple business to establish a connection with that wire and tap it.

No sooner said than done—and done with

great effect, most disconcerting to the Germans. The operator could only operate by night; but that sufficed. For seventeen successive nights she sat up by her apparatus, taking notes of the German orders and despatches, and making full copies of them, which she handed, the next morning, to the sub-Prefect, who gave them to trusty messengers, by whom they were quickly conveyed to the head-quarters of the 18th French Army Corps, then at Gien. For seventeen days, therefore, the French commanders always had full knowledge of the German plans, and never allowed themselves to be taken by surprise by them. The Germans knew—for it was obvious—that there was some leakage of information somewhere; but they failed to discover where or through whose instrumentality.

At last, however, an accident, which almost amounted to an act of treachery, betrayed the truth to them.

The servant of the Dodu household—a frivolous maid-of-all-work—was found to be flirting with German soldiers. Mme Dodu, furiously angry, spoke her mind to her; the girl lost her temper, as such girls, when so reprimanded, are very apt to do. She rejoined with a *tu quoque*:

"After all," she said, "what I am doing is not nearly so bad as what you are doing—sitting up, night after night, to steal their despatches."

"Hold your tongue," said Mme Dodu; but it was too late—the mischief had been done.

The wrangle had been overheard by a German soldier who happened to know a little French. He listened attentively, and reported what he had learnt to an officer; and, the clue thus given, the mystery was quickly solved. Mlle Dodu was instantly arrested, brought before a court-martial, and sentenced to be shot. The sentence was to have been carried out in her own garden, where she was kept under observation. A priest, suspected of being a disguised *franctireur*, was also brought into that garden and shot before her eyes. "It will be your turn next," they told her. "You have only an hour to wait."

But the commander of the German forces had his humane hesitations. The war was so nearly over that the execution would have seemed an act of vengeance rather than of justice. Seeing that France was already beaten, he shrank from the responsibility of ordering it, and carrying a hideous memory through life. One may suspect that he admired in spite of his rage at having been so cunningly deceived. So he reprieved his prisoner, and telegraphed to Prince Frederick Charles for instructions; and Prince Frederick Charles, though the French had many reasons for not loving him, was of a different fibre from Von Bissing, Von der Lancken, and Von Sauberzweig. He remembered, no doubt, the exchange of pleasantries which we

have recorded; and his orders were that Mlle Dodu should be treated as a prisoner of war and sent to Germany with the other prisoners. As it happened, the armistice was arranged before the convoy started, and it was at Pithiviers that she was set at liberty. The French narrator adds that the German officers in occupation of the town were among the first to offer her their congratulations on her release and the assurance of their respectful homage.

That, properly speaking, is the end of the story; but it is a story with a sequel. The Military Medal, and the Decoration of the Legion of Honour, came to Mlle Dodu in due course. She received professional promotion—first a post at Enghien, and afterwards the office of Inspector-General of *Écoles maternelles*; but it was left to a private citizen to come forward with the offer of a more substantial reward.

A letter was delivered, one day, to Mlle Dodu, —a letter which fell, as it were, from the skies. Her correspondent desired to know whether she was the daughter of his old friend, Dr. Dodu, the naval surgeon. She replied that she was, and then he explained. He was a very old man, he said; he had quarrelled with all the members of his family; he proposed, therefore, to bequeath the whole of his fortune—which was considerable—to his old friend's daughter, who had distinguished herself so nobly during the dark days of the invasion. Mlle Dodu replied, as one would have expected her to reply,

that, while a souvenir would be welcome to her, she could not think of accepting any legacy which would do injustice to her benefactor's relatives.

The philanthropist submitted to the remonstrance. When he died, just six months later, it was found that his relatives were to divide the bulk of his fortune, but that Mlle Dodu was a legatee. Happily, however, the fortune was so large that the legacy yielded such an income as it was possible to live upon. Mlle Dodu decided, therefore, to leave the public service; her decision being partly prompted, it is said, by the fact that her colleagues had shown themselves jealous of her distinctions and decorations, and made things uncomfortable for her. At all events, she retired into private life, and thenceforward divided her time between Paris and Bièvres, where she possessed a small estate. She had many friends; but one does not hear of any suitor; and she died unmarried only a few years ago.

She was not the only employee of the Post and Telegraph Department who risked her life for her country during the war. One cannot leave the subject without paying a passing tribute to Mlle Wipper, who was threatened with a court-martial for refusing to work the telegraph for the Germans at Sentheim, near Belfort, and was only saved by the news of the capitulation of Paris, and to Mlle Joséphine Mayer of Molsheim, in Alsace, who hid French

letters, refused to say where she had hidden them, and was sent to serve seven years' imprisonment—a captivity from which she was only delivered through the intercession of Jules Favre, after the preliminaries of peace had been signed.

CHAPTER V

Women in the Russian Campaign of 1812—Elizabeth Hatzler, the dragoon—Joséphine Trinquart, the *cantinière*—Women at the crossing of the Beresina—Nidia, the mistress of General Montbrun—Adventures of the actresses at the Moscow theatre—Mme Verteuil—Aurore de Bursay—The Reminiscences of Mme Domergue.

A WORD next of the hardships which women endured during the retreat from Moscow. Most of them were actresses; and some of them have told their stories. One of them, Mlle Louise Fusil, at one time the bosom friend of Talma's first wife, published a book on the subject. It was her book, even if—as seems probable—a journalist wrote it for her; and we will draw on it, first pausing to glance at some of the other stories of which only anecdotal notes have been preserved.

There is the story, for instance, of Elizabeth Hatzler, who wore the uniform, and served as a dragoon. Her husband was with her; he was wounded, and she put him in a sledge, and dragged him for many a weary mile over the snow. At last, however, the sledge was overtaken by the Cossacks, and both she and her husband became prisoners of war, and spent no less than two years in captivity. At last they

obtained their release, and got back to France, where he died in 1819. Elizabeth Hatzler then emigrated to the United States, and settled at Philadelphia, where, in spite of the shock to her constitution, she lived to the great age of ninety-one.

Then there is the story of Joséphine Trinquart —another of those valiant *cantinières* whose glories have already furnished the material for a chapter. She led two soldiers to the rescue of a wounded officer. They were shot down, and she went on without them. Two of the enemy galloped up to attack her. She shot one of them, bayoneted the other, took his horse, lifted her wounded officer on to it, and rode off with him in triumph. Her constitution seems to have suffered as little permanent injury from her hardships as that of Elizabeth Hatzler, for she did not die until 1872.

A third story may be taken from Ségur's account of the passage of the Beresina. The soldiers pressing across the bridge, Ségur tells us, saw a woman trying to row two children across in a fragile skiff. A hummock of ice came up against the skiff and capsized it. Forthwith an artilleryman plunged into the freezing water, saved one of the two children, and swam to land with it. The child was heard crying for its mother, and the soldier was heard comforting it. He had not fetched it out of the river, he was heard saying, in order to leave it on the bank. He would take its mother's place, and

see that it wanted for nothing; but there the story stops, and one does not know whether circumstances permitted him to fulfil his promise.

It is with regret that one sets beside that story another of a very different kind. One mother, it is related, her mind unhinged by the horrors she had witnessed, threw her baby away, in order to save herself. Twice it was picked up—once by Marshal Ney himself—and handed back to her; and twice she pitched it back into the snow. In the end, we are told, another woman took the infant from her, leaving its mother to break down and perish by the wayside—as there can be little doubt that she did. The last that was heard of her was her cry of protest: that she wanted to get back to France—that the child was too young to care whether it got back to France or not.

Next we come to the story of a certain Nidia, related by Ney's mistress, Ida de Sainte-Elme, in her *Mémoires d'une contemporaine*.

"There were quite a number of women," Ida de Sainte-Elme tells us, "following the army. It was my good fortune to find a friend in a young Lithuanian lady, whose enthusiasm for the French reached the point of heroism. She had given Prince Eugène some very important information about Platoff's march; and, by doing so, this modern Jeanne d'Arc had earned the gratitude of the Commander-in-Chief and the admiration of the army. In fol-

lowing the dictates of her martial enthusiasm, however, Nidia had also yielded to a more intimate and secret passion. Alas! During the course of this terrible campaign she had the sorrow of losing the hero who had inspired her courage."

That hero was General Montbrun. His death had left Nidia unprotected; but his memory continued to be her inspiration:

"Nidia had pinned a piece of crape to her sleeve; and when the liberties of military life tended towards licence, and she had to listen to jests ill adapted to her delicate taste, she silenced the jesters with a haughty look, and the words:

"'Soldiers, I beg you to respect the mourning which I wear for the brave Montbrun!'"

It remains to be said that Nidia got safely across the Beresina, but died at Torgau, during the passage of the Elbe.

And now we come to the actresses, though not yet to Louise Fusil. We will speak first of Mme Domergue, the wife of the stage-manager of the Imperial Theatre at Moscow, and her friend Mme Verteuil, and her sister-in-law, Mme Aurore de Bursay. Her husband was one of the forty French residents whom Rostopchin arrested and deported to Nijni-Novgorod when Napoleon was about to enter the city. He subsequently wrote a book about his experiences—

a book to which his wife contributed a chapter giving an account of her own adventures while she was separated from him.

It is from her that we hear of the sad fate of Mme Verteuil. A French officer had promised to see her safely through her troubles; but, somehow or other, she got separated from him. At Smolensk she tried to take shelter in some building which a French sentry had been set to guard. He tried to stop her; but she would not be stopped—presumably she was one of those actresses who believe, in the pride of their talents, that they can go anywhere and do anything with impunity. But war breaks down such privileges; and the business of sentries is to act, and not to argue. This sentry, having remonstrated vainly, felt that he had no choice but to run his bayonet through Mme Verteuil; and his thrust was fatal.

Aurore de Bursay was more fortunate; and in her story there is even a touch of comedy. She was in a carriage, driving under fire; and the carriage was smashed by one of the Russian cannon-balls, though its occupants sustained no harm. But Aurore de Bursay was a poet as well as an actress; and the carriage contained the manuscript of one of her poems, a little piece entitled *Le bonheur de la médiocrité*. She remembered the story of Camoens' swimming ashore with the *Lusiad*; and her one anxiety was to rescue that manuscript from the wreck. She would not stir—she would not

allow any one else to stir—until it had been sought and found. At last the search was rewarded. The poem was found. Aurore de Bursay stuffed it away in her corsage, and accomplished the rest of her journey on one of the ammunition wagons.

Mme Domergue herself had to take charge, not of the poem, but of a baby. Ney at first got her a carriage and handed her into it; but presently the carriage was wanted for some other purpose, and she was turned out of it, and then her sufferings began. How she could get no food for her child except a few lumps of sugar, but kept it alive on them; how a Polish officer, unable to help her otherwise, threw her a hunk of bread as he rode by; how soldiers invited her to sit by their camp fires and share their toasted horse-steaks,—all this is set forth in her letter. And then she tells us how, by a happy chance, when she was in despair, and almost at her last gasp, a seat was once more found for her in a carriage.

It was a full carriage; and one of its occupants was Mme Antony, the daughter of Léonard, famous as the hair-dresser of Marie Antoinette. "Give me the child. It can sit on my knee," called Mme Antony; and Mme Domergue seized that chance of saving it. Then it was the coachman's turn to help. His perch was not very comfortable; but Mme Domergue would be better off there than in the snow. If she cared to get up, he would get down, and mount the

horse instead. It was duly done; and then General Laborde happened to come by, full of great oaths, and moved to indignation. What was the meaning of that? he wanted to know. A woman shivering on the coachman's box! Why was not room found for her in the carriage? Surely the carriage was not so full as all that! What load was it carrying?

The principal load, he was told, was a cask of rum, placed in it by the orders of the general's own aides-de-camp. No one in the carriage dared to disobey those orders. And then the floodgates of the general's eloquence were opened, and the oaths poured forth:

"What's that? You were going to keep a cask of rum in the carriage and leave a poor woman, tired to death, to tramp along on foot! Blank! Blank! Blankety blank! Just you pitch that blankety cask out of the blankety window. My aides-de-camp, indeed! I'll talk to my blankety aides-de-camp! Water's good enough for me to drink, and water shall be good enough for them."

So out of window the cask went, and Mme Domergue took its place; and General Laborde gave her some of his own store of wine, still using wingèd words. There must be no blankety nonsense! She must drink it—not for her own sake, but for the child's. He meant to save that child; it must come home safely, and grow up, and be a soldier.

He saved it ; and Mme Domergue ended her journey in a carriage belonging to General Rapp. Even then, though Rapp had a pack of hounds which were killed and eaten, hound by hound, she was not at the end of her dangers or her discomforts. The Cossacks were very near ; on one occasion Cossacks were killed with their hands thrust through the carriage window for the purpose of plundering her. Still, she won through. Rapp, on parting from her at Vilna, gave her five louis for current expenses ; Mortier, at the same time, handed her ten louis. The money enabled her to buy what she needed during the fever which laid her up at Vilna ; and when she recovered, she supported herself as a needlewoman until the day when the release of Rostopchin's prisoners enabled her husband to rejoin her.

There we will leave her while we turn to the story of Louise Fusil, who in the later years of the reign of Louis-Philippe was still haunting the foyer of the Comédie Française, and telling all who cared to listen to her how she had crossed the Beresina with Napoleon. In her case, thanks to her *Souvenirs d'une femme sur la retraite de Russie*, we have no loose bundle of anecdotes, but the full story of a life.

CHAPTER VI

Louise Fusil of the Moscow Theatre—Her performance before Napoleon during the occupation—Her return with the Grande Armée—Her narrow escape from death—Her adoption of a foundling—Nadèje, the Orphan of Vilna—Her dramatic talents and untimely death.

LOUISE FUSIL was, in the French idiom, *enfant de la balle*; not only the daughter, but also the granddaughter, of comedians. Her maiden name was Fleury; she was born at Stuttgart, in 1774, and was brought up at Metz by her grandfather, once "le beau Fleury" of the Comédie Française, and her grandmother, *née* Clavel. One of her Clavel cousins was Mme Saint-Huberty, prima donna at the Opera.

In 1784 Mme Saint-Huberty visited Metz, and heard her cousin sing. Such a voice, she said, must not be wasted in amateur circles on provincial air; she herself would see to the training of it. So, at the beginning of 1788, she carried Louise off to Paris to receive finishing lessons from Piccini, and then took her on tour with her in the South of France. At Toulouse Louise met and married the comedian Fusil; but the comedian became a soldier, and ulti-

mately got his commission; while the actress remained an actress and was presently admitted to the Théâtre français, where she became intimate with the Talmas.

As an actress, Louise made a considerable reputation; but she did not save money. She thought that she might perhaps fare more prosperously abroad; so she set out in 1806 for St. Petersburg, and in 1807 obtained an engagement at the Imperial Theatre at Moscow, where she soon turned all heads with her charming interpretation of Chateaubriand's charming lines:

> Combien j'ai douce souvenance
> Du joli lieu de ma naissance!

She became the fashion at Moscow. "My songs," she tells us, "were all the rage, and people used to draw pictures to illustrate them in their albums." She was received as a friend of the family in the best houses, and gave lessons in singing and elocution to the daughters of the social leaders; and so the time passed; and Louise Fusil was still at Moscow when the war broke out, and the news came that Napoleon had crossed the Niemen and was marching on the city.

Being on the best of terms with the authorities, Louise was in no immediate danger: there was no prospect, for instance, that she would be included in the group of prisoners whom we have seen deported to Nijni-Novgorod. She

applied in vain, however, for a passport to St. Petersburg ; and she knew that, if she ventured to start without a passport, she would be refused horses at the first post station she came to. So she had to stay ; and that is how it came about that the French soldiers, entering Moscow, found a French actress ready to receive them—an actress who introduced herself by thrusting her head out of a window, and calling to a dragoon : " Mr. Soldier ! Mr. Soldier ! You're a French soldier, aren't you ? I'm French too."

They were delighted to make her acquaintance ; the rigours of the occupation troubled her very little. It was no distress to her, for instance, that French officers were billeted in the house. She welcomed them as her protectors ; they treated her with flattering consideration ; and it was arranged, with Napoleon's approval, that she should organise a theatrical entertainment.

A hall was found in a deserted palace which the conflagration had spared, and a company was got together. Mme Aurore de Bursay, whom we have already met, acted as stage manager, and the band of the Guards provided the orchestra. The performances were continued daily until the very eve of the retreat ; and Louise brought down the house with a sentimental ballad of the style then in vogue, applauded and encored, she assures us, by the Emperor himself :

Un chevalier qui volait au combat,
Par ses adieus consolait son amie :
" Au champ d'honneur l'amour guide mes pas,
Arme mon bras ; ne crains rien pour ma vie."

But then came the sudden decision to retire. The actresses were told that they might stay where they were or accompany the retreating army as they preferred ; but none of them dared to remain behind. The weather was still splendid ; and those of them who could get carriages expected a pleasant, and not particularly adventurous, journey. Louise got a carriage ; and her journey was not particularly eventful until she reached Smolensk ; but there began the accumulation of horror upon horror's head.

There was a narrow bridge to be crossed there, and Louise's horses broke down in the middle of it, so that her carriage blocked the way. The order was formal that any carriage which blocked the way was to be burnt ; and the soldiers liked burning carriages because it gave them a splendid opportunity for pillaging. But an officer came to the rescue. " One moment," he said. " I think I can get you by. I'll do my best " ; and he gave his order : " Soldiers, to the wheels of that carriage and push it ! " They pushed, and got her across ; and presently she knew why she had been helped. The officer who had come to her assistance had mistaken her for the wife of one of the generals ; and he now begged her to bring his name before her

husband's notice as that of a suitable candidate for promotion. She promised to do so, and drove on.

At Smolensk Louise was able to take a days' rest; but her hardships were only beginning. It was not long before she had to abandon her carriage and all its contents, and trudge through the snow with the rearguard, with the knowledge that hordes of Cossacks were hovering near, awaiting their chance to swoop. She managed to get another horse, taken from the shafts of another carriage which had collapsed; but the horse broke down and she once more had to walk. She walked all night, struggling to get to Krasnoe, having heard that the Emperor and his staff were there, and expecting that one of her friends would help her. But the Emperor and his staff had already left Krasnoe when she got there. "Then there is nothing for it," she said to the gendarme who was helping her along, "except to lie down and die. I haven't the strength to walk another step." What followed was what one expects to follow in a sensational serial story:

"I felt that the cold was freezing my very blood. People say that it is a pleasant way of dying, and I can well believe them. I heard voices in my ear: 'You mustn't stop here; get up!' I felt some one shaking my arm, and I did not like it. I had a delightful sensation of falling into a deep and peaceful sleep.

In the end I heard nothing more, and completely lost consciousness. When I came to myself again I was in a peasant's cottage. They had wrapped me in furs, and some one was holding my arm and feeling my pulse; it was Baron Desgenettes. A group of men stood round my bed, and I thought I was waking from a dream; but I was so weak that I could not move. I scrutinised the various uniforms. General Burmann, whom I did not then know, was looking at me with interest. Old Marshal Lefêbvre came up and said to me: 'Well, how are you getting on? You've come to life again, you see.'

"I learnt that they had picked me up in the snow. At first they were going to put me close up to a blazing fire, but Baron Desgenettes had stopped them, exclaiming: 'Be careful! You'll kill her if you do that. Wrap her up in all the furs that you can find, and place her in a room without a fire!'

"For a long time I lay where I was. When I began to recover a little warmth, the Marshal brought me a large bowl of very strong coffee. It stimulated me, and set my blood circulating once again. 'Keep the bowl!' said the Marshal. 'It will be an historical relic in your family—if you ever see them again,' he added beneath his breath."

Nor did the Marshal's active interest cease when Louise had drunk the coffee; he put her

in his own carriage, just as General Rapp had put Mme Domergue in one of his carriages. She crossed the Beresina in it, passing close to Napoleon himself, who called to her not to be frightened, and to the King of Naples, who paid her a compliment as she passed. When she was across, Marshal Lefêbvre's son, General Lefêbvre, gave her his arm; she was leaning on it, and looking back, when she saw the bridge break.

And so to Vilna, where Louise had her opportunity of rendering a service in return for the services which had been rendered to her. General Lefêbvre had been wounded, and could not be moved; his father, the Marshal, was in despair. He had written to the Russian general who was about to enter Vilna, making an appeal to the chivalry of a generous foe; but he could hardly trust the enemy to provide his son with a nurse. It was Louise's chance. "I will stay with him, Marshal," she said. "I promise you that I will look after him like a mother." And she kept her word, though Cossacks came to raid the bed-chamber:

"They came up to the general's bed, and threatened him, saying in Russian: 'Give us money!' I then unfastened from my neck a little image of the Virgin of Kief which Princess Kutusof had given me, while I was in Russia, as a safeguard against ill-luck, and now it served its purpose. I laid it on the general's bed, saying: 'How dare you molest a dying man!

You may be sure that God will punish you.' The Russians are great worshippers of icons, especially of that of the Virgin of Kief; so that my presence of mind saved us, though the shock to my poor patient gave his illness a bad turn."

He got worse and worse, in fact, and died in the early morning of December 19, 1812, after whispering his last injunctions to his nurse:

"No doubt you will get back to France," he murmured; "they don't detain the women. Cut off a lock of my hair—now—you may be afraid to do it after I am dead. Take it to my parents and tell them that I entrust you to their care. I would write to my mother about it if I had the strength. You have lost everything, I know; but she is rich, and she will not forget to reward you for your devotion."

Then the end came, and Louise had to think about herself. She had no money, and no means of earning any; but she found friends who looked after her while she continued to look after the wounded. The Russians, as we have seen, knew her; and she consequently had nothing to fear from them. And presently—surprise of surprises!—a Russian officer brought her a French baby: a little girl just old enough to speak. He had picked it up in the snow and wrapped it up in his cloak. It was difficult for him to take charge of it—would Louise do so?

She said that she would, for the time being at all events ; and she went to see Kutusof and tell him what had happened. While she was waiting for him in his antechamber she picked up a volume of French poetry, and read these lines :

Enfançon malheure
M'est assurance,
Que Dieu n'envoie
Pour être ton pavois.

It seemed like an omen to Kutusof as well as to Louise. She must be the child's mother, he said, and he would be its godfather. It should be called Nadèje—a Russian word meaning Fate. It must go back to France, and he would supply the necessary roubles for the expenses of the journey.

So Nadèje was adopted, and grew up to be famous, not only as the Orphan of Vilna, but also as an actress of some distinction and still greater promise. She made her début at the Comédie Française at the age of fifteen, but died of consumption at twenty. One cannot end her story better than by quoting the lines which Mme Desbordes-Valmore—herself an actress before she became a poet—consecrated to her memory :

Elle est aux cieux, la douce fleur des neiges,
Elle se fond aux bords de son printemps.
Voit-on mourir d'aussi jeunes instants !
Mais ils suffraient, mon Dieu ! tu les abrèges.

Son sort a mis des pleurs dans tous les yeux,
C'était, je crois, l'auréole d'un ange
Tombée à l'ombre et regrettée aux cieux;
D'un peu de vie, oh! que la mort se venge.

Fleur dérobée au front d'un séraphin,
Reprends ton rang, avec un saint mystère;
Et ce fil d'or, dont nous pleurons la fin,
Va l'attacher autre part qu'à la terre!

CHAPTER VII

Deborah — Boadicea — Geneviève — Frédégonde — Hermangarde — Julienne de Breteuil — Eleanor of Guienne — Guirande de Lavaur — Jeanne de Montfort.

THERE was Deborah—"a mother in Israel"; and there was Jael, the wife of Heber the Kenite, —"blessed among women." But that Bible story is too well told to be repeated in a modern book; and though the exploit of Jael has the sanction of Deborah's song—which is, perhaps, for sheer poetry, the greatest war-song ever written by a woman—it has to be classed with methods of warfare which the civilised world has outgrown.[1] Yet Deborah, one must pause to note, was a poet of war who had vision as well as enthusiasm, and saw the suffering of war as well as its triumphs:

"The mother of Sisera looked out at a window and cried through the lattice: 'Why is his chariot so long in coming? Why tarry the wheels of his chariots?'"

The feminine note, if one is looking for it, may surely be found in that verse.

One comes next to Boadicea; and of course

[1] Or so one thought before one knew what the Germans were capable of.

all the world is familiar with Cowper's famous lines :

> When the British warrior Queen,
> Bleeding from the Roman rods,
> Sought with an indignant mien
> Counsel of her country's gods. . . .

And the Druid's prophetic response :

> Rome shall perish,—write that word
> In the blood that she has spilt;
> Perish, hopeless and abhorred,
> Deep in ruin as in guilt.
>
> Rome, for Empire far renowned,
> Tramples on a thousand States:
> Soon her pride shall kiss the ground,—
> Hark! the Gaul is at the gates!

But when one turns from poetry to history one finds that the authentic facts about Boadicea are very few. She was Queen of the Iceni, the widow of Prasutagus, an independent British prince who had acknowledged the Roman suzerainty, and she was scourged by the Romans for resisting their attempt to incorporate her principality in their dominions. Half Britain took up arms in indignation; though Britain had also the further grievance that Seneca—the eminent Roman who doubled the parts of philosopher and money-lender—had suddenly called in his loans. In the fighting which ensued St. Albans and Colchester were burnt, and 70,000 Romans and "friendlies" were killed. The Romans recovered their ground in a battle which is believed to have been fought in Watling

Street; but, even so, there was a long guerilla war before peace was finally restored. That is all; it is quite impossible to add any of those little details which endow portraits with verisimilitude.

In the case, too, of the early women warriors of France a few bare facts have to suffice. The women of Gaul took part in the fighting against Cæsar in 61 B.C.; but the particulars of their prowess have been lost for lack of a sacred bard. Geneviève fought against Attila in A.D. 451; but that bald statement cannot be amplified. In the case of Frédégonde, who fought against the Austro-Burgundians and reconstituted the kingdom of Neustria in 593, one is able to add just one interesting detail: Frédégonde rode at the head of her army, carrying her child Clotaire in her arms. There follow on our list Hermangarde, the great-granddaughter of Charlemagne, who defended the town of Vienne for two years against Boson Comte d'Autun, and Richilde, wife of Baudouin VI, Comte de Flandres, who allied herself with Philip I of France, and went campaigning against her own husband; and then we come to Julienne de Breteuil.

Julienne was the natural daughter of Henry I of England, and her husband was Eustache de Breteuil. She fought for her husband against her father, stood a siege, and formed a plot for taking her father prisoner at an interview arranged for the purpose of negotiating terms

of surrender. How her plot failed, to her great personal discomfiture, is set forth by the chronicler Orderic Vital :

" The King," writes Orderic, " never imagining that a woman could be capable of such base trickery, came to the conference at which his wretched daughter proposed to compass his destruction. She aimed an arrow at her father from a *ballista* ; but, by the special grace of God, she failed to hit him. Then Henry instantly caused the castle bridge to be broken down, so as to cut her communications with it. Julienne, seeing that she was surrounded, and that there was no chance of her being rescued, surrendered the castle to Henry ; but she could not obtain his permission to depart from it in peace."

On the contrary, he put her to great inconvenience :

" By his orders she was required to slide down from the top of the wall, without the help of a bridge or any kind of support ; and she descended in this disgraceful manner, displaying her undraped limbs to the whole army. The incident occurred at the beginning of Lent, in the third week of February, so that the cold water of the moat gave the delicate princess a chill when she fell into it ; and the discomfited warrior got out as well as she could, and made the best of her way to join her husband at Paci-sur-Eure."

Evidently Henry I thought that war was not

woman's sphere, and was resolved to give his daughter a lesson to that effect. Yet women warriors did not cease—there were women who fought in the Crusades. Eleanor of Guienne, for instance, the wife successively of Louis VII of France and Henry II of England, accompanied her first husband to the Crusades; but there is not much to be said in praise of her. Her first husband repudiated her for infidelity, and her second husband found her so disagreeable a companion that he sent her to a convent, where she remained until Richard Cœur de Lion released her. We will leave her, and pass on to Marguerite de Provence.

She was the wife of Louis IX, generally called Saint Louis: she crossed the seas with him, and was in Damietta during the siege. One has a glimpse at her in a chronicler's record of a conversation which she held with an officer in her army:

"Swear to me, sir, that you will grant me the favour which I am about to ask of you."

"Speak, madam; I swear that I will do what you desire if it is in accordance with my duty."

"Swear, then, that, if the Mussulmans get into the town, you will cut off my head."

"That will I, madam, and right willingly; I had already thought of doing so."

There was another woman Crusader, known as *La dame aux bottes d'or*, on account of the

magnificence of her uniform, who commanded a company of women during the Second Crusade ; and we have an account written by a woman—the sister of a monk—of her experiences on the ramparts of Jerusalem during Saladin's siege of the Holy City :

" I discharged, as far as possible, the duties which appertain to a soldier. I wore a helmet, like a man ; or, at any rate, I walked on the ramparts, wearing on my head a metal dish which did as well as a helmet. Woman though I was, I had all the appearance of a warrior. I slung stones at the enemy ; and, though I was sorely frightened, I learnt how to conceal my fears. It was very hot ; and the combatants had never a moment to rest. I brought out water to the fatigued soldiers on the walls ; and once a big stone, as big as a mill-stone, fell quite close to me, and I was hit by one of the fragments."

And still they come. In 1211, Guirande de Lavaur defended the castle of Lavaur against the Bishops of Toulouse, Lisieux, and Bayeux, who had that redoubtable warrior, Simon de Montfort, to command their forces. Simon was so furious at her stubborn resistance that when, at last, she surrendered, he threw her down the castle well, and had the well filled up with stones. In 1343 Jeanne de Belleville, widow of Amaury de Clisson, whose head Philip of France had cut off, swore to avenge her husband,

and appealed for help to Edward III of England : he gave her three ships, and she became a pirate and harried the French coasts. In 1370 Julienne du Guesclin, a sister of the famous Constable du Guesclin, and a nun, at Ponterson in Brittany, helped to defend her convent against the English Captain Felton. With her own hand she hurled three Englishmen down their scaling-ladders, and the rest retired. The next day the Constable du Guesclin arrived and took Felton prisoner ; and the Constable's wife, seeing what had happened, mocked at the unfortunate soldier :

" Aha ! my brave Felton ! " she exclaimed. " So here you are again ! A nice experience this, for a gallant soldier like you to be beaten twice within the same twenty-four hours—first by the sister, and then by the brother ! "

And then there was Jeanne de Montfort : the most famous of all the woman warriors before Jeanne d'Arc—she of whom Froissart has written that " she had a man's courage and a lion's heart." Hers is a story which it is possible to tell at greater length than those of some of the others.

The trouble arose out of a dispute as to the succession to the dukedom of Brittany, not yet an integral part of the kingdom of France. The two claimants were Jean de Montfort, whose wife was our heroine, and Charles de Blois who claimed through his wife, Jeanne de Penthièvre ;

there is no need to confuse counsel by any attempt to decide which of them was in the right. It was Jeanne who urged Jean to assert himself; and he promised to do so. "If I live, madam," he said, "you shall be Duchess of Brittany"; and he caused himself to be proclaimed Duke by the citizens of Nantes, and seized the fortresses of Rennes, Hennebon, and d'Auray.

His rival appealed to the King of France, as his liege lord; and the King of France decided in his rival's favour; but Jean de Montfort declined to accept the decision. He appealed for help to Edward III, pointing out to him that Brittany would be "the finest possible entrance gate for invading and conquering the kingdom of France." Then the fighting began. Nantes was betrayed to the enemy, and Jean de Montfort was taken prisoner. That was the disaster which made Jeanne a fighting woman. "A new Penthesilea," writes the historian Roujoux, "now arises in the midst of Brittany, with all the grandeur of a noble and generous character; and a mother's love once more worked miracles."

While Jean had been defending Nantes Jeanne had been at Rennes; and now she issued a manifesto. Her heart, she said, was "deeply grieved at the news that her lord was taken"; but she continued: "Nevertheless, my lords, be not discouraged. It is but a single man that we have lost. Here is his son and heir, who, if it

be God's will, shall restore him to his rights." And then she went from stronghold to stronghold, repeating the appeal :

"Do not desert him who places his trust, next to God, in you and your loyalty. I place under your tutelage his heir, who will grow up to be great and good, and will take his father's place in the war against the enemies who, at the present hour, are in occupation of his lands."

That was her answer to Charles de Blois, who bade her "go back to her spinning-wheel" ; one finds the feminine note in it as surely as in Deborah's song. And presently we find her standing siege in her castle of Hennebon, and inspiring even the maid-servants to help in the defence. "Mere girls," we read, "were employed in digging up the paving-stones in the castle yard, and carrying them to the battlements, to be hurled thence on to the heads of the assailants, together with fireballs and quicklime." And Jeanne herself headed a sortie, and fired the enemy's camp, at the very time when they were trying to batter down the main gate.

Her retreat was cut off ; but she fought her way to d'Auray, and thence fought her way back to Hennebon, where, a few days later, an English contingent arrived by sea for her relief. There followed a raid on the besiegers' battering rams, in which a certain Messire Gauthier so distinguished himself that Jeanne, as Froissart

assures us—"kissed him two or three times, like the valiant lady that she was." Then the siege was raised; and Jeanne, after distinguishing herself on land, distinguished herself equally on sea. In a naval battle, fought off the coast of Guernsey, "she had"—we are still quoting Froissart—"a very sharp sword in her hand and fought with great courage."

The issue of that engagement was doubtful, however, and the war continued. Jean de Montfort escaped from his captivity and rejoined his wife, but only to die. Charles de Blois was taken prisoner by the English; but his wife, Jeanne de Penthièvre—a woman of a courage hardly less than that of her antagonist—took the field on his behalf. Each of them, as we see, was fighting for what she regarded as the rightful inheritance of her child. Their little war proceeded simultaneously with that great war between France and England which included the battle of Poitiers. It raged so long that Jeanne de Montfort's child grew up before it was concluded, and took his mother's place as Commander-in-Chief of his partisans.

At last it was ended by the battle of d'Auray, where du Guesclin was taken prisoner and Charles de Blois was killed; and then, in 1365, the Treaty of Guérande was signed. Charles of France, the chronicler tells us, "was very angry, for his discomfiture touched him to the quick"; but he nevertheless gave Jean de Montfort and his adherents letters of pardon,

for having " made war against the King without any adequate reason," and took into his service as many of them as cared to join it. But Jeanne de Montfort was, by this time, dead.

Assuredly she had shone in war, albeit only in a private war. We shall speak next of women who have been leaders in wars which have involved greater and deeper issues.

CHAPTER VIII

Matilda of Tuscany—How she brought the Emperor to Canossa—Jeanne d'Arc—The state of France during her childhood—Voices and visions—Her interview with Robert de Baudricourt—Summoned to the King at Chinon—Inquiries of the ecclesiastics into her *bona fides*—The examiners satisfied and the Maid launched upon her mission.

A GREAT name, to which only a brief space can be given, is that of Matilda of Tuscany.

Matilda's period was that when the Papacy and the Holy Roman Empire were at daggers drawn. It is a long story; but one can give the essence of it in a sentence. Hildebrand, the monk of Cluny who had become Pope Gregory VII, prohibited the imperial investitures; the Emperor Henry IV replied by deposing the Pope; the Pope rejoined by excommunicating the Emperor—and excommunication was not, in those days, a thing to be treated slightly or laughed at. Many imperial feudatories took up arms and signified to the Emperor that he could be Emperor no longer unless he abased himself to the point of pleading for absolution. Matilda was one of those who went to war to that end; and her castle at Canossa was the scene of the crowning act of the drama.

The scene has often been described. There

could be no question of the Pope's going to the Emperor—the Emperor had to come to the Pope. He had to cross the Alps in the dead of winter, and then to await the Pope's convenience. For three days the Pope kept him waiting in the courtyard—standing barefooted in the snow—a miserable penitential figure; and, in the end, he had to implore Matilda to intercede for him:

"Unless you come to my help, I shall break down no more bucklers. The Pope has laid his curse on me, and my strong right arm is withered. Obtain absolution for me, my cousin; go and obtain it quickly."

She interceded; and the Pope absolved the Emperor, albeit in severe and bitter words which cut him like a lash. The Emperor went away, apparently penitent, only to try to entrap the Pope in an ambush; but Matilda—"the lady with the hundred eyes"—as a contemporary styled her—scented the danger and kept the Pope out of it. That was the great event which has made "going to Canossa" a symbolic phrase for the submission of secular to ecclesiastical authority. To follow up its consequences would take us far astray from our subject; and a more famous name awaits us—that of the Maid of France.

The air is, of course, in the case of Jeanne d'Arc, thick with controversy. Was she, in very truth, inspired by God, or did she only

think that she was inspired? Did she hear real voices—the promptings of saints or angels—or was she the victim of hallucinations? Did she herself devise a great scheme for the deliverance of France, or was she merely a tool in the hands of clever men who exploited her in order to fan the flames of French fanaticism? Did she succeed in her mission through military genius, or because her task was easy and her enemies were inefficient? Such are a few of the problems which beset our path; some of them real problems, and others, perhaps, only verbal quibbles. We must steer our way among them as best we can, first clearing the ground by explaining "the great pity that was in France."

France, we must remember, had long been riven by a blood-feud. On the one side were ranged the Burgundians under Jean sans Peur; on the other side the Orleanists or "Armagnacs," led, after the murder of Louis d'Orléans, by Bernard, Comte d'Armagnac. In 1411 Burgundy invoked the aid of England; and that was the beginning of the war of which the best-remembered incident is the battle of Agincourt. Henry V, as we all know, married the daughter of the King of France, and proclaimed himself his heir; while the Dauphin, presently to be Charles VII, fled to Bourges. His nominal accession dates from his father's death, two months after the death of Henry V, in October 1422; but his was a kingdom *pour*

rire. He was not crowned. None, or hardly any called him the King of France; those who did not continue to call him the Dauphin spoke of him derisively as the King of Bourges.

Meanwhile the wave of conquest was spreading, under the direction of John, Duke of Bedford, Regent of France. Roughly speaking, the English and Burgundians held France north of the Loire, while the Dauphin was in possession of the country to the south of it. There was desultory fighting going on here, there, and everywhere, and even where there were no armies marching and counter-marching, there were freebooters waylaying merchants, burning farms, and raiding cattle. And then, in 1428, the English decided to force the line of the Loire, and, to that end, laid siege to Orleans—the Moscow of their invasion, though they did not suspect it. That was "the great pity that was in France" in the days when the Maid was growing up.

She was born at Domrémy on the Meuse, apparently, though there is a doubt about the date, on January 6, 1412. Her father, Jean d'Arc, was poor, but owned a little property, and enjoyed the esteem of his neighbours. Her mother had acquired the name of Romée—perhaps, though that, again, is not certain, because she had been to Rome as a pilgrim. One of her uncles was a village priest; the others followed trades. She herself prayed in churches in preference to dancing in the fields with other

children; and presently she began to hear Voices and to see Visions.

It would be absolutely idle to inquire whether she actually heard the Voices or only fancied that she heard them; whether she actually saw the Visions or only fancied that she saw them. The distinction between hearing and fancying that one hears—seeing and fancying that one sees—means nothing except in relation to material sounds and sights, the normal objects of a normal consciousness. One need no more try to draw it in the case of the Maid of France than in the cases of Socrates and Bunyan. To her, as to them, the voices were real; and she was fully persuaded that Saint Michael, Saint Margaret, and Saint Catherine had appeared to her. It was afterwards made a ground of ecclesiastical reprobation that she did not tell a priest what she had heard and seen; but one can easily understand why she did not. To children, priests are apt to seem like schoolmasters—unsympathetic persons, prone to snub the fanciful.

Perhaps, if she had prattled and been snubbed, the Voices and the Visions would have ceased: such Voices and Visions depend upon a sensitive receptivity, too easily destroyed by contact with unsympathetic common sense. As it was, the consciousness of exceptional communion with the unseen gave Jeanne the feeling that she was different from other girls, and dwelt in a different world from them. She neglected

her work, as well as her play, to give herself to mystical devotion, kneeling for hours together on the cold stones of the village church. So doing, she heard more Voices, and the message of the Voices became more and more specific.

"Jeanne, be a good girl!" was all that they had to say at first; but then came the promise of Saint Michael that Saint Margaret and Saint Catherine should come to her, and give her good counsel; and then came the injunctions of these holy visitants:

"Daughter of God, you must leave your village, and you must go to France!"

"Take the standard from the King of Heaven: take it boldly, and God will help you."

"Daughter of God, you must take the Dauphin to Reims, in order that he may receive his worthy consecration!"

"Daughter of God, you must go to Captain Robert de Baudricourt, in the town of Vaucouleurs, in order that he may give you men-at-arms, to conduct you to the noble Dauphin."

And then, most specific of all, came the injunction to lead French troops to the relief of Orleans. One can trace through the successive utterances the gradual formation of a plan in the Maid's mind; one can also trace certain influences at work, helping to form it. Most potent of all was a certain current prophecy: that one woman should ruin the kingdom of France, and that another woman should restore

it. The work of destruction had been done by the Dauphin's mother, Isabeau de Bavière, who had signed the Treaty of Troyes, and given her daughter to the King of England ; the world was waiting for the heroine who should undo the mischief. The priests awaited her advent with especial eagerness ; for they were among the chief sufferers from the " great pity."

How far the priests, or any of them, encouraged the Maid's idea that she had a mission from on high to restore the Dauphin is uncertain and disputed. It was, at any rate, an acceptable idea, alike to them and to the common people ; and it was unquestionably through the common belief in the current prophecy that Jeanne was able to obtain access to Robert de Baudricourt, who held Vaucouleurs for the Dauphin. She appealed to her cousin, Durand Lassois, to help her ; and it was by him that she was conducted to Vaucouleurs,—" attired in a patched red gown "—and introduced into Robert de Baudricourt's presence. The voice, she said, enabled her to identify the Captain among his company of men-at-arms ; and she said to him boldly :

" I come to you from my Lord, Messire, in order that you may warn the Dauphin to be on his guard, and not to give battle to his enemies."

And furthermore :

" The kingdom belongs not yet, in fact, to the

Dauphin. But it is the will of my Lord that the Dauphin shall be King, and shall hold the kingdom as a trust from Him ; and it is I who am to conduct him to his coronation."

"Who is 'my Lord'?" asked the Captain. "The King of Heaven," replied the Maid. But Robert de Baudricourt was a ribald man to whom it seemed incredible that any woman, not professedly of light reputation, should seek to consort with soldiers. He bade her cousin take her home to her father ; and her father, when she returned to him, was of much the same opinion as the Captain. He would rather, he said, drown his daughter in the Meuse than let her follow the army.

But Jeanne's conviction of her mission had grown upon her ; and she talked of it to all and sundry. She stopped a labourer at his work, for instance, in order to say to him : "There is a Maid, between Coussy and Vaucouleurs, who, within a year, will bring about the coronation of the King of France." People said that she was mad, and pointed to her, saying derisively : "That is the girl who is going to deliver France and the royal family!" And meanwhile the Voices continued to exhort her, and the exhortations became more and more precise, as Jeanne came to know more and more of the military situation. After nine months she was received a second time by Robert de Vaucouleurs, and this time she said to him :

"Know you, Sir Captain, that God has several times warned me that I am to go to the noble Dauphin, who is to be, and is now, the King of France, and that he is to provide me with men-at-arms, and that I am to raise the siege of Orleans, and take him to be crowned at Reims."

Robert was a jovial, superficial man, as little disposed as ever to take the Maid and her errand seriously; but the ceaseless flow of her prophecies was making its impression on others, if not on him. It does not much matter whether those others believed in her or merely saw a way of making use of her. Some of them, at any rate, wrote to the Dauphin about her and aroused his curiosity. He gave orders that she should be sent to him at Chinon; and she set out with a small escort on February 23, 1429.

It was a journey of seventy-five leagues through a country more or less in the occupation of the enemy; but the party, being small, was unmolested because it was unobserved. Jeanne rode in armour, subscribed for by some of the citizens of Vaucouleurs, and carried a sword given her by Robert de Baudricourt. To those doubters who asked her whether she was quite sure that she would carry out her purpose, she answered boldly:

"Have no fear for me. That which I do I do in obedience to command. My brothers in Paradise tell me what I am to do. For four

years, or even for five, my brothers in Paradise and my Lord have bidden me go to war and recover the kingdom of France."

And so, at the end of eleven days, to Chinon, where Jeanne had to wait two other days while the Dauphin considered whether she was a saint or a witch. The question had to be sifted by ecclesiastics before anything further could be done; but, as the ecclesiastics were divided in opinion, Charles had to decide for himself. He was probably helped to his conclusion by an astrologer's prediction. "Your victory," the astrologer had written to him, "will lie in following the counsel of a Maid; pursue your triumph, without ceasing, to the walls of the town of Paris." So the Maid was introduced into his presence, and told him that God had sent her to his aid, and that, if he would give her soldiers, she would raise the siege of Orleans for him.

He was impressed, but he was cautious; and so were the ecclesiastics. The mediæval mind had its scepticism as well as its superstitions, and its own way of distinguishing between prophetesses and adventuresses; and so investigations were set on foot. A Board of Theologians was deputed to examine Jeanne in the articles of faith and religion. A special commission was despatched to Domrémy to check her statements about her origin and early life. Orleans, though its need was sore, had

to wait six weeks while these inquiries were pursued.

Perhaps it was the wiser way. It would be easy to give such an account of the investigations as would make them seem trivial and silly. To the modern student of evidence they prove nothing except that Jeanne had always been a well-conducted young woman; and it did not follow that, because she was a well-conducted young woman, she had the power to put the Dauphin's enemies to confusion. But faith, as we know, moves mountains; and it was necessary, not only that the Maid should have faith in herself, but also that France should have faith in the Maid. The delay gave time for rumour to spread, and so made it possible to launch the Maid upon a world ready to believe that her mission was a fulfilment of old prophecies.

In a sense, no doubt, the proceedings were a fraud upon credulity; and there can be little doubt that, in some ecclesiastical quarters, the fraud was conscious and deliberate. The prophecies which the ecclesiastics quoted for their purpose were, in some cases, fabrications, and, in other cases, had no bearing whatsoever on the matter to which they were supposed to refer. It was not true that the advent of the Maid had been predicted by Merlin, and the Venerable Bede; among those who disseminated the belief there must certainly have been some who knew better. But the Maid herself,

it is quite clear, was no conscious party to any fraud, pious or otherwise.

She had her fixed idea, and she was impatient. She regarded the proceedings of the theologians pretty much as we regard "red tape." It seemed to her that they were wasting precious time when it was urgent that she should be up and doing. Her replies to their questions were often curt and contemptuous. "What language did your angels speak to you?" she was asked, for instance, by one of her examiners, who spoke the patois of Limoges; and her answer was: "They spoke better French than you do." She was most indignant, too, at the proposal that she should prove her supernatural gifts by working a miracle. She had not come to Chinon to work miracles, she said. Let them take her to Orleans, and there she would work the miracle of raising the siege and scattering the English.

The six weeks' ordeal passed, however, and the report of the learned doctors was favourable. They reported that Jeanne was of good repute, and that there seemed to be miraculous circumstances associated with her birth and childhood; that, though she had worked no miracle as yet, she gave as her reason that God forbade her to do so, and that it would be well to conduct her to Orleans in order that she might work the miracle which she promised there. To have fear of her, they concluded, or to reject her aid when no appearance of evil could be found in

her, would be to show oneself unworthy of God's help, as Gamaliel had said, with regard to the Apostles, at a council of the Jews.

Copies of that report were circulated broadcast—the Holy Roman Emperor was one of those who received a copy of it. And then, the minds of men having been prepared, Jeanne was taken to Tours, and equipped with a suit of mail, and launched upon her enterprise.

CHAPTER IX

The nature of the Maid's enterprise—The march to Orleans—Orleans entered—The English siege-works attacked—The siege raised.

We must not exaggerate the difficulty of the Maid's enterprise, or the importance of the part which the Maid was intended to play in it.

Orleans, as has already been said, was the Moscow of the English invasion, and the relief of Orleans was to be the turning of the tide. The English army was constantly finding itself short of men, of munitions, of provisions. It established a certain number of block-houses, called *bastilles*, at intervals, outside the walls of Orleans; but the investment of the city was never complete. Sorties were frequent; and both reinforcements and fresh supplies—herds of cattle and droves of pigs—were received by the besieged from time to time. If such a siege was not raised, the only reason could be that no serious attempt was made to raise it. Nor was it likely that, in the absence of such an attempt, it would be taken by assault. An old chronicler's account of the repulse of such an assault will be in its place here because women played their part in it:

"On Thursday, October 21, 1428," we read, "at about 12 a.m., the English made a terrible attack on the French who held the rampart at the end of the bridge. The assault was long persisted in, and many English were killed and wounded, for the French threw them down from their scaling-ladders into the moat, where they could not get up again, and pelted them with blazing coals, and quick-lime, and poured on to them boiling fat and boiling water, which the women of Orleans fetched. Moreover, for the refreshment of the French in the midst of their hard struggle, the said women provided them with wine, and meat, and fruit, and vinegar, and clean napkins, together with stones, and everything else what they needed for the defence; and some of them were seen in the course of the assault, thrusting the English down from the rampart with pikes."

Decidedly, therefore, the condition of the stronghold was by no means so desperate that nothing short of a miracle could relieve it; and though the Maid had promised that God would work a miracle beneath the walls, the relief expedition was by no means prepared on the assumption that the walls of the English block-houses would fall down flat because a banner was waved and a trumpet blown at them. The army which accompanied the Maid consisted of about 7,000 men, and convoyed 600 wagons laden with supplies, and 400 head of cattle.

Nor must we picture the Maid as commanding this great host. Her mission was not to command, but to inspire. She had nothing to say —she could in the nature of the case have nothing to say—to the military organisation; she rode in the ranks as a prophetess rather than a warrior. Not every one believed in her at first, though all believed in her in the end; but everything was done that pomp and circumstance could do to make her a rallying-point of religious enthusiasm. Priests marched before her carrying a banner, and singing *Veni creator Spiritus*. Her departure was heralded by the despatch of a letter, addressed to King Henry, his Regent, and the three officers—Scales, Suffolk, and Talbot—in command of his army before Orleans. It is a long letter; but a few lines will show what was the note of the summons:

"Restore to the Maid, who is sent from God, the King of Heaven, the keys of all the goodly towns which you have taken and outraged in France. She has come from God, to claim the royal blood. . . . If you will not believe the news thus sent to you by God and by the Maid, then, wherever we find you, we will smite you hard, and make such a to-do as has not been heard in France these thousand years. For the King of Heaven will give the Maid and the men-at-arms who are with her greater strength than you have in all your assaults, and in the battle you

shall see on which side is the right. But, if you do the Maid's bidding, then shall you go in her company thither where the French will accomplish the greatest feat of arms ever yet done for Christendom. Make answer, therefore, whether you will make peace in the city of Orleans ; but if you will not make peace, then shall great harm presently be done to you."

The letter is given to us as one which the Maid, who could neither read nor write, dictated ; and it is, of course, impossible to say whether it was written out exactly as she did dictate it. The summons to the English to make peace with the French and join them in a Crusade—presumably against the Turks who were then threatening Constantinople—seems more likely than not to have been added by an ecclesiastic. But the spirit of the letter, whether it was the Maid's own or a clerk's, was well conceived. It gave the impression, in an age in which such impressions were easily conveyed, that the war of which the Maid was the figure-head was a holy war, and that the powers of Heaven would be found arrayed upon her side.

In the case of the English that impression would doubtless be delayed—they would begin by laughing at a girl's idle threats. But that was no great matter—defeat would be likely to shake them beyond recovery if they believed that supernatural forces were at work against them. And the French, of course, on their part,

were infinitely more likely to inflict defeat if persuaded that they had supernatural help. So the letter was despatched and delivered ; and the manner of its reception showed that it was producing its effect. The herald who carried it was detained ; and a message was sent to Paris to inquire whether it would be proper to burn him alive. The raising of the question proves that the rumours of the Maid's coming had already caused consternation in the English camp.

Jeanne herself, meanwhile, entered Orleans with her convoy ; and her army returned to Blois to fetch a second. It was a clumsy tactical course. The French, being in greater strength than the English, who were hanging on by the skin of their teeth, awaiting reinforcements, ought to have given battle at once ; but Jeanne had nothing to do with that. She looked upon herself, at that hour, less as a military leader than as the guardian of an army's morals ; she had chased loose women from the ranks ; she had insisted that her soldiers should refrain from oaths and confess their sins to priests. In that way she had formed, or fancied that she had formed, a new army on a New Model ; she feared that, if she left it, the Old Adam would reappear in its midst.

She left it, however, and entered the town by night, clad in her armour, mounted on a white horse, and escorted from the gate by a torch-light procession ; and her arrival was like that

of the generals of whom it has been said that their presence on a battle-field is as good as an additional army corps. Not men, but faith—not the genius of a military leader, but the conviction that victory was within their grasp—was what the citizens of Orleans needed. Jeanne brought them that, with the result that pacific tradesmen became as eager to fight as the retainers of the feudal lords. It became an instinct with them to sally and storm blockhouses while Jeanne was still sending the enemy summons after summons to quit those blockhouses and depart in peace—"failing which I shall make such a to-do among you as will never be forgotten."

Her voices were still prompting her, though their utterances were sometimes perplexing. They woke her at night, and she leapt out of bed, lamenting the dubiety of their commands:

"Name of God!" she exclaimed. "My Counsel has told me that I must march against the English, but I know not whether I ought to attack their blockhouses or to fall upon Sir John Fastolf, who is to revictual them."

That matter, indeed, was already being settled, not by the voices, but by the *bourgeoisie* of Orleans. An attack upon a block-house was already proceeding, and the Maid called for her armour and hastened out to take part in it. She had never taken part in a fight—she had never even seen a fight—before; but her mere

presence transformed what had begun as a demonstration into a serious assault. The block-house fell, and prisoners were taken. So great is the power of faith—its power was the greater because the French were in a majority of about five to one; and the Maid harangued her host.

"Confess your sins," she said, "and render thanks to God for the victory which you have gained. Otherwise the Maid will no longer help you by continuing in your company."

It was a useful victory, won at a trifling cost. In the course of three hours' fighting only three French combatants had been killed. The English were not discouraged; but the citizens were stirred to enthusiasm. Having begun to fight, they meant to go on fighting, whether with or without the approval of their military leaders; and it was the Maid who insisted that they should be allowed to have their way. The Sire de Gaucourt tried to keep them back—presumably because he doubted their military value, as professional soldiers always doubt the military value of untrained amateurs; but the Maid admonished him:

"You are a wicked man," she said, "not to let these people go out to battle. Yet it matters little whether you let them or not. With your leave or without it, they will have their sally and

acquit themselves every whit as well as they did the other day."

So the Sire de Gaucourt gave way, and even offered to lead the sally which he could not prevent; but the real leader, both then and until the end of the siege, was the Maid herself.

She had a personal insult to avenge. Her last message, summoning the enemy to surrender, had been shot into the English camp, fastened to an arrow. An answer had been shouted back, acknowledging the receipt of "a letter from the harlot of the Armagnacs." Jeanne had burst into tears on hearing the brutal words; but she had once more seen her Visions and heard her Voices and been comforted; and there would be no weakness when she buckled on her armour and took the field—not though a Voice had warned her that she was destined to be wounded.

Once again we find her in conflict with the professional soldiers. They argued at a Council of War that, as the town was well provisioned and an army was marching to its relief, it would be better to await reinforcements before pushing the attack home—an absolutely sound view by all the rules of strategy; but the Maid once more spoke up to the captains:

"You come from your Council," she said, "and I come from mine. Believe me, the counsel of my Lord will be accomplished, and your counsel will come to naught."

And so it happened.

The arguments of the captains were most plausible. To denude the walls of their defenders, as the Maid and the citizens proposed, was to invite the enemy to "rush" the city during their absence: the risk was not one which it was reasonable for a garrison, not yet hard pressed, and expecting a strong relieving force, to take. Enthusiasm, however, required that the risk should be taken; and enthusiasm —helped by the weakness of the English forces—carried the adventure to a triumphant issue. "Let those who love me follow me," Jeanne cried; and they all followed her.

She was wounded, as the angels had warned her that she would be. An arrow entered a joint in her armour and pierced her shoulder—it is said that the pain made her cry. But she would not let the hurt be charmed, though she believed that charms were efficacious. "Better to die," she said, "than to commit a sin, or do what is contrary to the will of God." So her wound was dressed, and presently she returned to the fray, cheering her men as before, promising them the victory, and calling on one of the English captains who had insulted her: "Glasdale, surrender to the King of Heaven. You called me a harlot, and I am full of pity for your soul and the souls of all your men."

So the battle continued to rage; and, in the end, the great outwork known as Les Tourelles was taken, and the Maid's standard floated on

the ruins. The bulk of the French army marched back in triumph into Orleans, and debated whether it was proper to renew the battle on the next day, which happened to be Sunday. Once more it was by the Maid, and not by the captains, that the question was resolved. Some of the world's greatest battles, including Waterloo, have, as we all know, been fought upon a Sunday; but Jeanne decided that it was better to observe the Lord's Day than to follow up a success and complete the confusion of the enemy :

"For the love and honour of the holy Sunday," she said, " do not be the first to engage in battle. Do not attack the English ; but if the English attack you, defend yourselves valiantly, and have no fear, for the victory will surely be yours."

But the English had no intention of attacking. They drew up in line, as if in challenge and demonstration ; but when they saw that the demonstration was unheeded and the challenge was declined, they wheeled about, and marched away in good order. " It is not my Lord's will that you should fight them to-day," said the Maid. " You will be able to fight them another time. Now go and give God the glory."

Thus Orleans was relieved after a siege of 209 days—nine days after the entrance of the Maid.

CHAPTER X

Theological treatises on the Maid's mission—Disputes between rival historians as to her military capacity—The power of faith —The march to Reims and the coronation of the King of France.

THOUGH Orleans had been delivered, theological deliberations did not cease. It was apparent, and was therefore, in a general way, agreed that the Maid was marvellous. The whole face of the war had been altered by the inspiration of her advent. But the phenomenon needed explanation. All Christendom, in fact, was talking about it; and it was the clear business of the clergy to lay down the law on the subject. So, while the Maid and the men-at-arms were following up the Orleans victory with other victories, bishops and others were putting and answering the questions: What was it proper to think about the Maid? What use was it reasonable to make of her?

We have a notable treatise on the subject, dashed off at the topical hour, by Jacques Gelu, Archbishop of Embrun. He was a most learned clerk; he supported his arguments with quotations from innumerable classical authors, from Euripides and Aristotle to Eratosthenes

and Marcus Varro; and the language in which he contrasted the Maid's glorious feats of arms with her humble origin sounds to a modern ear more eloquent and picturesque than courteous. He wrote of her as "a child brought up on a dung-hill"; he compared her to "the insects such as flies and fleas, by means of which God often abases the pride of men." But he meant well.

His conclusion was favourable, though piety and worldly wisdom were curiously commingled in it. He advised, in the first place, that all the armies should be properly equipped and that all the measures which prudence prompted should be taken. Then, but not till then, "the counsel of the Maid should be asked, sought, and solicited in preference to any other." And that not only in military matters: the Maid might also be engaged to promote piety in high places:

"We give the King this advice: that he should, every day, perform some task agreeable to God, and should confer with the Maid about it; and that, whatever counsel the Maid gives him, he should act upon it devoutly, in order that God may not withdraw His support from him, but may continue the gift of His grace."

Very similar, though in some respects more ample, was the report of Jean Gerson, sometime Chancellor of the University of Paris, and now living in a monastery at Lyon.

The Maid's supernatural endowment, he laid down, was not one of those fundamental articles of the Catholic faith which every man must accept or perish everlastingly—it obviously could not be, as the Pope had not been consulted on the subject. But it was a probable belief, convenient and edifying; and its wide dissemination was desirable. If the King and the clergy preferred to reserve their own judgment, hey should at least discourage doubt on the part of the soldiers and the common people. Nor need they be perturbed by that Article of the Canon Law which forbade women to wear men's apparel. That article was only directed against an indecorum which was not here involved. On the assumption that the Maid was the channel of the divine grace, operating for the greater glory of France, the end might properly be held to sanctify the means.

Meanwhile the fighting continued. Jargeau and Beaugency were taken; Meung was evacuated; the battle of Pathay was won. Suffolk was made prisoner, and Sir John Fastolf's relieving force was scattered. How much or how little the Maid had to do with it all is one of those obscure problems concerning which rival historians are apt to argue with excess of fury. Nearly all the authorities are on the one side; nearly all the probabilities are on the other. Andrew Lang, discussing the point with M. Anatole France, belaboured his opponent with quotations from eye-witnesses of the

Maid's prowess, declaring that there is nothing to set against their evidence except "the repeated assertions of a peaceful man of letters," concluding with a scorn which is anything but peaceful:

"Dunois, de Termes, d'Alençon, and the other knights are dust, their good swords are rust; and it is safe to give them the lie!"

No doubt; but M. France might reply that it is also impossible to cross-examine them, and inquire whether they intended to criticise or to pay compliments. And he might add that what we know of the Maid's military dispositions is extremely vague; and that that is where Andrew Lang's comparison of her to "the untutored Clive" breaks down. We know that Clive won the battle of Plassey by acting in defiance to the advice of a Council of War; whereas, in the case of the Maid, we know little except that she urged men forward, assuring them of victory, with such stimulating words as—

"On, friends, on! The Lord has judged the English. Be of good courage. Within an hour from now we shall have them!"

And that, surely, is enough to know. It makes Jeanne something more than the "mascot" to which M. Anatole France sometimes seeks to reduce her, though a good deal less than the great military leader which Andrew Lang sees in her. Her true mission was not to direct

but to inspire; and Jeanne inspired enthusiasm in the French army, anxiety in the English army, and curiosity throughout Europe, not because she was believed to be a great general, but because she was believed to be a prophetess inspired by God. Even in Germany men disputed whether she was a human being or an angel in human shape; while an alderman of Toulouse wrote to consult her concerning a proposal for the depreciation of the currency. Faith, it is evident, was the force which was moving mountains; though the mountains, as we have seen, were in unstable equilibrium, and not very difficult to move.

Besides her faith, however, the Maid had her fixed ideas—fixed in an unalterable order of succession. The first had been to relieve Orleans; the second was to take the Dauphin to be crowned at Reims. After that, she meant to march to Paris, expel all the English from French soil, and obtain the release of Charles Duc d'Orléans—the prisoner of Agincourt, who languished, a prisoner, in English castles, writing ballades in praise of peace, and cheerful songs to ward off melancholy.

But though the Duke sang blithely in Dover Castle, while the Maid worked her wonders, years were to elapse before he got his freedom. The Maid meant to do things, one at a time, in the order of their importance. The fighting after Orleans had been the soldier's idea, not hers. A great general would assuredly have

followed up the successes by marching on Paris, where Henry VI's Regent, stricken with panic, had taken refuge in the fortress of Vincennes. But Jeanne, not being a great general, but only a great prophetess, held that the Dauphin's coronation must come first.

"Noble Dauphin," she said to him, when he wavered, like the weak man that he was, not knowing what to do next, "hold not such long and wordy councils, but come at once to Reims and be worthily crowned there"; and Dunois, the Bastard of Orleans, tells us how she argued that, "when the Dauphin was crowned and consecrated, the power of his adversaries would continually dwindle. So all came over to her opinion"—an opinion for which there was, no doubt, something to be said, though there was also a great deal to be said against it. From the soldier's point of view, of course, it was sheer folly to give the enemy the opportunity to recuperate. On the other hand, coronation—especially at Reims—had a sentimental and superstitious value. Miraculous virtue was attributed to the oil preserved through the ages in the Sainte-Ampoule. The English had talked of anointing Henry VI with that unguent; and it was natural that the French should wish to anticipate them by first anointing Charles. They could reasonably believe that it would brace him and win him adherents.

As, in fact, it did, the march to Reims beginning on June 29. One might call it the race

for the chrism, were it not for the fact that neither the King of England nor the Regent, on his behalf, was in a state, just then, to begin a rival march to the holy city. They held certain towns on the road, but not in sufficient force to resist. At the most, they could only demonstrate and bargain before surrendering. That was what happened at Auxerre, at Troyes, at Châlons, and at Reims itself ; and it was only at Troyes that there seemed to be even a possibility of trouble. The threat brought the Maid into the Dauphin's Council, and also into the field :

"Noble Dauphin," we find her exhorting him, "give orders to your people to assail the town of Troyes, and waste no more time in over-long deliberations, for, in the name of God, before three days I will cause you to enter the town, which shall be yours through love, power, and courage. And false Burgundy shall look very foolish."

And so it happened. There was a demonstration—a semblance of preparations for assault. Jeanne was seen by the burghers throwing—or making the gesture of one who threw—fascines into the moat ; and presently the Bishop came out to negotiate, and it was arranged that Charles should enter the town in peace, pledging himself to accord an amnesty to all those who had been his enemies. And so to Châlons, where the Count-Bishop came out

to yield up the keys of the town, and thence to Reims, where there was as little resistance as at Châlons. The report that the English were marching in force on Reims was not believed there; and the inhabitants worked all through the night in order to have everything ready for the French King's coronation on the morning of July 17.

The great regalia of the kingdom were lacking. The crown, and the sword, and the sceptre of Charlemagne were at Saint-Denis, which was in the possession of the English. But a crown which might serve was found in the cathedral, and the other appurtenances proper to the ceremony were improvised. The Maid stood by the King's side holding her standard aloft during the performance of the rite; and it was, relates a chronicler, "a most fair thing to see the goodly manners of the King and the Maid"; and then the Maid knelt to the King, and said to him with tears:

"Gracious King, now is accomplished the good pleasure of God, whose will it was that I should raise the siege of Orleans, and conduct you to this holy city of Reims, to receive your holy consecration, which proves that you are the true King, and that the kingdom of France is rightly yours."

"And great pity," we read, "overcame all those who beheld her, and many of them wept."

One knows not why, unless it be because

tears belong to joy as well as grief, and to all sudden reverses of fortune, however happy. The pity and the pathos of the tears were not for those who shed them, but for us who come to this climax of the Maid's story with the knowledge of the end of it in our minds, and the distant vision of the funeral pyre—not so very distant either—clouding with the wreaths of its black smoke the glorious spectacle of the renascence of France, accomplished by the Maid's simple and single-hearted faith.

But the end was not quite yet. The Maid had set herself other tasks not destined to be accomplished in her life-time. We have to accompany her on other marches, and see how she quitted herself in other battles.

CHAPTER XI

After the coronation—Vicissitudes of fortune—Failure of the attack on Paris—Rival prophetesses—Capture of the Maid at Compiègne—Failure of the French to ransom her—Her trial and execution at Rouen.

AFTER the coronation, the French seem to have muddled their business badly. The attack on Paris was delayed too long, and then it was made with an insufficient siege-train, and with insufficient energy. The assailants were called off by their vacillating King before their inability to enter was really demonstrated; and they left behind them three hundred hand-carts and six hundred and sixty scaling ladders. The Maid's intrepidity was the one redeeming feature of the defeat, though it would still seem that she was there—whatever legend may say—not to command, but only to encourage and exhort. Neither by officers nor by men were her exhortations accepted as commands. The men went back when she cried, "Forward!" not because they were panic-stricken, but because they were "called off." And that though she had called, in their name, upon the Burgundians to yield, shouting to them:

"In Jesus' name, surrender to us speedily.

For if ye yield not by night-fall, we shall enter by force, whether ye will or not, and ye shall all be put to death without mercy."

It was her first failure, visible and palpable; the more tragic because it was not in any way her fault. It proved to the English that the faith of the French in her was, after all, limited. It gave vigour to the shouts of "Wanton!" and "Minx!" with which they derided her, and encouraged them to think of her as a witch, a limb of the devil, not an angel sent from God for their distress. So we may say that the long cloud which was presently to eclipse, not her glory, but her material triumphs, first touched her on that disastrous day; but the unfaltering courage of which, at the moment, men took so little notice, remains an heroic example for all time. One may gratefully quote Andrew Lang's tribute, even though one has difficulty in accepting his doctrine of the Maid's conscious military genius:

"Through the mist," he writes, "one figure stands out clear in the sunlight, discerned alike by friend and foe: a girl of seventeen in white armour, who lets herself down into the deep dry fosse, who climbs out on to the *dos d'âne* under the city wall, and, like Bruce at Perth, fathoms the water of the great fosse with her lance, under a rain of projectiles, till she is smitten through the thigh. Undaunted, un-

weakened, she cries on the men. History shows no other such picture."

Still, just as nothing succeeds like success, so nothing fails like failure. It was known already that Jeanne could be wounded; and, indeed, no such immunity from the common lot was claimed either by her or for her. Now it was proved that she could be beaten—that her presence with an army did not necessarily bring good luck. The bodily wound was nothing in comparison with the wound to her prestige. Her personal courage never flagged; but her power of inspiration began to fail. And her great mission had been to inspire. When she ceased to inspire, the faith which had begun by moving mountains would end by failing to move molehills.

No blame attaches to her: all the blame belongs to her timorous King and his tortuous diplomatists. A great military leader, of course, would have overcome their fears, trampled on their fatuous hesitations, and organised victory in spite of them. Those who think of the Maid as a great military leader might revise their opinion if they try to picture any of the famous generals of history, from Hannibal to Napoleon, taking a lower place in the councils of such a sovereign as Charles VII, and awaiting the pleasure of his craven cowardice instead of hustling him into instant action. But Jeanne was not a military leader—she was a prophetess; and prophetesses,

like prophets, can do nothing for people who stone them, or merely turn their backs on them.

One finds a sign of the times in the fact that rival prophetesses arose, and that Jeanne wrangled with them. She wrangled, in particular, with Catherine de la Rochelle, a married woman, who claimed to have miraculous means of procuring her "wherewithal to pay your men-at-arms." "Go back to your husband, look after your husband, and feed your children," the Maid retorted. There was, further, a dispute between them as to whether the Matron was, or was not, like the Maid, visited in the watches of the night by saints and angels; and it seems that the gift of prophecy loses some of its significance when too many share it, because a dispersed faith suffers in intensity.

The fact remains, of course, that the Maid was the only prophetess who counted; but she counted for less than before, because prophecy itself was counting for less than before. If there were times when she still gave signs and seemed to be supernaturally guided, there were also times when, as Andrew Lang puts it, she could work no miracles because of the people's unbelief. She was to achieve yet again at the siege of Saint-Pierre-Le-Moustier, where she was found almost alone by the side of the moat, after the others had retreated. "What are you doing here all alone?" one asked her.

"Why do you not retreat, like the others?" Whereto came the answer of the mystic:

"I am not alone. With me are fifty thousand of my folk. I will not quit this spot until I have taken the town. To the fascines and the hurdles, all of you, and make a bridge!"

She was obeyed: the assault was made, and the town was taken. But at the siege of La Charité the case was different. The beleaguering army fell into an ambush, and came to grief; the siege was raised, and the cannon were left behind. It is a fact not altogether without significance that the Maid's rival prophetess, the Matron, Catherine of Rochelle, had advised against the enterprise. "It is too cold," she had said. "I would not go"; and the warning, whether wise or not, may have helped to undermine the enthusiasm which alone could carry siege operations in the dead of winter to a successful issue.

A period of inaction followed. There was a truce with Burgundy; and the armies went into winter quarters. We hear of the Maid, some time between Christmas and Easter, being entertained at a public banquet by the citizens of Orleans, and buying the lease of a house in the town. But presently the truces ended, and the fighting was renewed. One of the Maid's fixed ideas was that she would only "last" a year, so that she had no time to lose; and already her Voices were warning her that the

end was near. She would be taken, they told her, "before St. John's Day," which was only ten weeks ahead of her. "When I am taken," she implored them, "let me die immediately without suffering long"; and their response was: "Be not troubled; be resigned! God will help thee!" Or so she told the story at her trial, adding: "Often I asked them the hour, but that they did not tell me. If I had known the hour, I would not have gone into battle."

But there one hesitates to believe her, believing rather that, even in the face of such a premonition, she would have proved to be braver than she knew.

It was in the trenches before Melun that the warning, as she supposed, was whispered to her; we can follow her thence to Lagny, to Soissons, to Senlis, to Compiègne, where her last fight was to be fought; but the tactical details need not trouble us. Enough to note that Compiègne was a strategic point dominating the Île de France, held by the French and threatened by the Anglo-Burgundian forces, and that Jeanne entered its gates on May 13. She left for Soissons; but Soissons had been sold to Burgundy by its captain, so that she had to return. She was back by day-break on May 23, and, at five o'clock on the afternoon of the same day she took part in a sortie, attired as if on a parade, with a surcoat of cloth of gold over her armour.

All that was intended was a raid upon an out-

post ; but the raiders stayed too long—whether to destroy the works or to gather in the booty. Reinforcements came up, and they were driven back. The retreat ceased to be orderly ; and the drawbridge was raised, and the portcullis lowered, in order that the pursuers might not follow on the heels of the pursued, and rush the town. The Maid, whom a Burgundian chronicler admits to have been doing deeds "beyond the nature of a woman," found herself in the marshes, with her retreat cut off. Not till the very end did she understand what was happening. Even when her companions urged her to get back to the town, she still shouted, "Forward! Forward! We have them!" But, even as she did so, she was pulled to the ground by her cloak, and found that her enemies had surrounded her, and were calling upon her to surrender. Whether she did surrender or was taken matters little, though the point has been disputed fiercely. She lay helpless, and was too valuable a prize to be slain if she could be captured.

That was the end of Jeanne's career in arms ; the rest is pitiful to read about—a shame equally to France, to Burgundy, and to England ; and our relation of it shall be as brief as may be. We have first to see how Jeanne was offered for sale by her captor, Jean de Luxembourg, who took her to his castle at Beaulieu, and how her friends stood by while her enemies drove the bargain ; and that, though prayers were being

offered for her in half the towns of France, and the appeal was addressed to the King of France himself by that Archbishop of Embrun whom we have already seen recommending that the Maid should be given her fair chance of proving that God had indeed sent her to the rescue:

"I commend unto you," he wrote, "that, for the recovery of this damsel, and for her ransome, ye spare neither measures nor money, nor any cost, unless you would incur the indelible disgrace of a most unworthy ingratitude."

The Archbishop might as well not have written, for the King did not mind disgrace, and did mind spending money otherwise than on royal favourites. He was the poorest of poor creatures, unstable as water, ready to flow this way or that, in compliance with any kind of doctrine or any tide of tendency. The wind of doctrine had shifted, and was blowing against Jeanne; Régnault de Chartres, Archbishop of Chartres, was blowing the bellows.

His motives are impenetrable, save by conjecture. He certainly owed to Jeanne his restoration to his see and its revenues—that march to Reims, on which the Maid insisted, had served his interests no less than it had served the King's. But it is also clear that he had some quarrel with her, and perhaps some jealousy of her. There is a story—it cannot either be proved or disproved—that he had tried to steal a crown at the time of the coronation,

and that she had prevented him. At all events, while the people were praying for Jeanne the Archbishop produced a substitute for her, and "ran" that substitute, as we moderns say, against her.

There had appeared a certain half-witted shepherd-boy of Gévaudan, in the Cevennes, claiming, just as Jeanne had claimed, that he had been sent by God to smite the English and the Burgundians hip and thigh. He had shown a sign—the stigmata in his hands, and feet, and side; he had spoken, not only against the Burgundians and the English, but also against the Maid:

"God suffered Jeanne to be taken," he said, "because she was puffed up with pride, and because of the rich clothes she wore, and because she had not done as God commanded her, but according to her own will."

The Archbishop repeated that comment in a communication to the people of his diocese, and added comments of his own; that Jeanne had been overtaken by misfortune through her own fault—because she "would not take advice, but did as she chose"; that God had raised up in her stead this shepherd, who "said neither more nor less than Jeanne." The letter is a curious medley of cynicism and superstition; and the half-witted shepherd never did anything to justify the belief professed in him. In the fighting men, at all events, he inspired no

faith at all; and it was not long before the English caught him, and, disdaining even to give him a trial, simply sewed him up in a sack and pitched him into the Seine. But meanwhile, as those who should have been her friends did nothing for her, Jeanne's fate was sealed. Just as an Archbishop had turned his back on her, so a Bishop bought her for the burning; the infamous Pierre Cauchon, Bishop of Beauvais.

By what arguments Jean de Luxembourg was persuaded to accept the price of blood; how Jeanne was taken from prison to prison, and ultimately brought before an ecclesiastical tribunal at Rouen; how her ecclesiastical judges bullied her in the dock, and tried to entrap her into unwary answers; how she bravely refused to deny either her King or her Voices; how she was coerced into the abjuration of her deeds, and then seized again, and retried, and convicted, and sentenced,—all these things, happily, may be left to be read elsewhere. It is a story of shame as well as pity—shame for the soldiers, shame for the statesmen, shame, above all, for the ecclesiastics. One realises, when reading it, that it was the Church which set the Revolution the example of "devouring its own children"; and it devoured them far more cruelly.

It would seem that the Maid weakened at last under the stress of the terror. It is recorded that she shrieked and tore her hair, crying out:

"Rather would I be seven times beheaded than thus burned!" She would have been more than human if she had not; it is not to secular, but to sacred history that one turns to find the parallel:

"And He was withdrawn from about a stone's cast, and kneeled down, and prayed,

"Saying, Father, if Thou be willing, remove this cup from Me: nevertheless, not My will but Thine, be done.

"And there appeared an angel unto Him from heaven strengthening Him."

To Jeanne also; one needs no proof—one need commit oneself to no mythology—in order to believe that. Faith, as the word is too often lightly used in pulpits, means little more than the rendering of lip-service to formulæ; but there is also a mystical faith which creates the help in which it puts its trust.

Jeanne's faith was of that order. This is the last recorded dialogue in which we hear her Voice:

"Master Pierre, where I shall be this evening?"

"Have you not good faith in the Lord?"

"I have, and by God's grace I shall be in Paradise."

And so to the last scene of the pilgrimage, whereat the flames of Rouen, no less than the flames of Smithfield, lighted a candle which was

never to be put out. One turns from the spectacle with averted eyes, lingering only to listen to the cry wrung from the executioner after he had done his work: "Sadly I fear that we have burnt a saint"—a cry which boded no good to the success of English arms in France.

CHAPTER XII

False Maids arise after Jeanne's death—Jeanne des Armoises—The Maid of Sarmaize—The Maid of Le Mans—Other women fighters—Isabeau de Lorraine—Marguerite de Bressieux—Jeanne Hachette—The Lady of Bretigny.

It has been shown that Jeanne d'Arc was neither the only saint nor the only woman included in the armies of the King of France. Some of the others have been named. It would not be worth while to charge the memory with the names of all of them. Historians speak of a "flying squadron" of *béguines*, guided, spiritually and otherwise, by Brother Richard, the popular preacher, who denounced the fashionable levities of the day. There was the Maid Pierronne, for example, who claimed that God had appeared to her "in a long white robe and a purple cloak." Like Jeanne, she was taken, and, like Jeanne, she was burnt; but her name is not glorified by memorable legends, though she had the courage to go to the stake, refusing to recant. It seems a caprice of history that she should have been thus forgotten; but one infers from the dearth of legend concerning her that she must have lacked, like the half-witted shepherd of Gévaudan, the inspiring gift of personality;

and so, when she disappeared from the French ranks, her fame was quickly blotted out.

Jeanne's fame, on the contrary, was to grow and grow, with one inevitable consequence. Though her body had been burnt there were those who could not, or would not, believe that she was really dead, but insisted that some miracle must have preserved her, and that she would reappear. So that the field was clear for impostors, conscious and unconscious; and the demand for impostors brought forth a supply. False Maids—who, in fact, were no more Maids than they were from Domrémy—cropped up at intervals in the land.

The most famous of them was Jeanne des Armoises. She was recognised by the Maid's brothers, and also by Jeanne de Luxembourg, the cousin of that Jean de Luxembourg who had sold the Maid to the unspeakable Bishop of Beauvais: a devout woman who wished to obliterate the black memory of her cousin's baseness. The Maid's eldest brother went to Orleans to announce his sister's return, and received a material reward for his good tidings—"ten pints of wine, twelve hens, two goslings, and two leverets." He also announced her to the King, who promised him a reward of one hundred francs, and actually gave him twenty. A proposed memorial service for the Maid was cancelled in consequence of the news.

Events progressed slowly; but those were days when people were often content to wait

very patiently upon events. Her hour, it was understood, was coming, but had not yet come; and patience was actually exercised while the alleged Maid married and bore two children. She maintained—and most people, though not all, were willing to believe her—that her value did not depend upon her virginity. When she came at last to Orleans, Orleans entertained her at a public banquet and presented her with "two hundred and ten livres of Paris as an acknowledgment of the services she had rendered to the town during the siege." In the years of 1438 and 1439 we find her fighting for France in the marches of Poitou and Guienne, and appealing, not in vain, to Spain for the help of a fleet. The Maréchal de Rais placed her in authority—just such authority as Jeanne had exercised—over the men-at-arms. But her end, nevertheless, was melancholy, though somewhat less than tragic.

Faith in her had never been so profound or so widespread as the faith in the Maid; and though she had fought, she had no outstanding achievements to her credit. Though the populace—or a provincial section of it—believed in her, the clergy did not; but it is quite idle to inquire why the mediæval clergy believed in one thing rather than another. At any rate, when the King reoccupied Paris in 1440, they treated her as an impostor and compelled her to confess that she was one. She was placed, in the character of an impostor, on a cold marble

slab in the Hall of Justice, and preached at. Then she was told to get up and go ; and history knows her no more.

But there were still other false Maids to arise : the Maid of Sarmaize, and also the Maid of Le Mans.

Who the former was no one really appears to know. She came, as it were, from nowhere, and proposed to play a game of tennis with Simon Fauchard, the curé of Notre-Dame-de-Sarmaize. He accepted her challenge, and, in the midst of the game, she said to him : " Now you may tell all the world that you have played tennis with the Maid." Then she went to the house of Périnet, the carpenter, to whom she said : " I am the Maid ; I have come to visit my cousin Henri." The cousin invited her to stay in the house, and set good cheer before her. Afterwards she seems to have wandered through Anjou, giving out that she was Jeanne and persuading some people to believe her. Perhaps it was little more than a case of obtaining food, lodging, and consideration by means of false pretences. It would also appear, however, that, in the course of her wanderings, she obtained a husband ; and there exists a document, dated February 3, 1456, according her permission to return to Saumur, on condition that she would dress as a woman and live in obedience to the prescriptions of respectability.

And then there was the Maid of Le Mans, whose real name was Jeanne La Férone. She

impressed her Bishop with the belief that she was divinely inspired; and he commended her in many letters. There was some idea that she might be helpful to the King, who was suffering from an ulcer in the leg. Officers were sent to Le Mans to examine her, and she gave them a message for the King:

"Commend me very humbly to the King, and bid him recognise the grace which God has granted him by lightening the burdens of his people."

It was a way of demanding a reduction of the taxes at a time when the Treasury was empty. That may be one of the reasons why this Maid was summoned before the Royal Council to be examined further; and it may also be one of the reasons why the examination had unsatisfactory results for her. It transpired, at any rate, that she was no maid, but a baggage; and the ecclesiastical court condemned her to be preached at in public in the towns of Le Mans, Tours, and Laval, to wear a fool's-cap during the sermon, and then to be imprisoned for a term of seven years on a diet of bread and water. She endured the penance, and then found a new avocation more suited to her character.

So much—and perhaps it is more than enough—of the saints and prophetesses of our period. It remains to speak of a few other women who, at the same time, wielded the sword, without

setting up any supernatural pretensions. The great names are those of Isabeau de Lorraine, Marguerite de Bressieux, and,—after the lapse of an interval—Jeanne Hachette, and a certain Dame de Bretigny.

Isabeau de Lorraine was the wife of the famous René of Anjou, and the mother of that Margaret of Anjou who was to marry our Henry VI, and become equally renowned in arts and arms—to found colleges, and to win battles. It was the mother who set the daughter the example of taking the field on a helpless husband's behalf. King René inherited the kingdom of Sicily while his enemies held him in prison; and Isabeau set out for Sicily in 1435, to fight for his kingdom in his place.

"This veritable Amazon," writes Etienne Pasquier, "who had a man's heart in a woman's breast, did so many noble deeds during her husband's imprisonment that her achievements ought to be inscribed in letters of gold in the annals of Lorraine."

Marguerite de Bressieux was also of Anjou, but she took the field in order to avenge a wrong which she herself had suffered. Her father's castle had been taken by storm by Louis de Châlons, Prince of Orange; and she herself, as well as other maidens, had endured the last insult at the hands of a brutal soldiery. That is how it came about that, when the royal troops, under Raoul de Gaucourt, Governor

of Dauphiné, were marching against Louis de Châlons, twelve strange and mysterious cavaliers, attired in black, wearing scarfs of crape, and carrying a banner which bore the device of an orange transfixed by a lance and the motto *Ainsi tu seras*, greeted the general with ceremonious salutations :

" Deign, noble lord, to accord us a place in your ranks. If our arms are weak, our hearts are strong, and bent upon nothing but vengeance. Victims of the most cowardly, the most degrading outrage, we aspire to wash it out in blood."

Raoul de Gaucourt would seem to have been quite modern in his protestations. War, he said, was a man's rough trade, and no game for girls to play at. If they did play at it, they might be hurt—no one could say how badly. But the girls knew all about that, and were taking risks with their eyes open. Insisting, they were enrolled in the French King's army ; and they had no patience with the chivalrous desire of the general and the other officers always to keep them from actual contact with the enemy.

At the battle of Autun they got their chance, and proved their worth. They uncovered their faces to charge ; and those who had wronged them recognised them, and took them, in their superstition, for the troubled spirits of the dead, returning to earth for their discomfiture. With

the result that the rout was complete, and the peasants finished with their pitch-forks those of the enemy who could not swim the Rhône. But Marguerite's first battle was also her last. She was picked up, mortally wounded, after the charge, and, dying before sunset, was buried with military honours.

Jeanne Hachette's exploit belongs to a date some forty years later, when Charles VII was dead, and Louis XI was ending the Middle Age by breaking up the feudal system. The most powerful of Louis's enemies was Charles the Bold, of Burgundy—he whom the Swiss ultimately broke at Morat, Grandson, and Nancy; and Charles came, in 1472, to lay siege to Beauvais, the town of the Bishop who had caused Jeanne d'Arc to be done to death. If Beauvais fell, Paris itself would be in danger, and the assailants numbered no less than 80,000; so the women helped the men to defend the walls, and Jeanne Fourquet, spinster, found herself famous among women. In the great assault she felled the Burgundian standard-bearer with an axe and took his standard from him. Whence the name by which men know her: a name which a statue at Beauvais still keeps alive.

The King sent for Jeanne and complimented her and all the women of Beauvais, and accorded them certain honourable and material privileges. Thenceforward, he said, the women of Beauvais should have the right to walk before

the men in the procession of Ste. Agradéme, and to wear, whatever their degree, such gorgeous apparel as they thought most becoming, without reference to the sumptuary laws which bound other women elsewhere. As for Jeanne herself, both she and her husband, when she married, should be exempted, thenceforth and for ever, from the payment of all taxes. So, being very eligible, Jeanne married twice,—her first husband, one Colin Pilon, being killed at Nancy in 1477; and, as late as the reign of Charles X, we find a certain Pierre Fourquet Hachette, drawing a pension from the King in consideration of the gallant exploit of his ancestress.

And that brings us, in conclusion, to Madame de Bretigny, who, though she did not fight, nevertheless rendered a valuable service. She caught the Bishop, who was trying to sneak out of the town, taking his valuables with him; and she stopped his exit. "Shut the gate!" she called. "Shut the gate! The Bishop is trying to run away"; and she seized the bridle of the Bishop's horse, and recalled the Bishop to his duty. "Stay, Bishop!" she said. "You have always lived with us, and now you must remain and die with us, if needs be!" And the Bishop had to stop.

CHAPTER XIII

End of the Middle Age—Wars of the Roses—Queen Margaret—Her exploits in the field—Her abdication and sorrowful old age.

THE precise date of the end of the Middle Age depends upon the taste and fancy of the chronologist. All historians, however, would agree in fixing it some time in the long reign of Henry VI—some time after Henry's attainment of his majority, and perhaps some time after the accession of Louis XI to the throne of France. One of the things which belonged to the Middle Age, and perished with it, was the feudal system. Louis destroyed that system in France by breaking the power of the great feudal lords; while, in England, the great feudal lords destroyed each other, like the cats (of Kilkenny) in the adage, in the long and bloody Wars of the Roses. And the great figure of those wars, for the purposes of this book, is obviously Margaret of Anjou, King Henry's consort.

She was not, of course, the first Queen of England to play a man's part in a civil war. We all learnt at school how Matilda, the mother of Henry II, fought for the crown against

Stephen, and was beleaguered by Stephen in the old Norman castle which still stands at Oxford, and had to escape as best she could. The Chronicle of Abingdon tells us that "they let her down at night from the tower with ropes, and she stole out, and went on foot to Wallingford." From school, too, we carried, or ought to have carried away, the knowledge that Isabelle, daughter of Philippe le Bel, of France, and wife of Edward II of England, took up arms against her husband and his favourites, and was afterwards sent to a nunnery by her son, Edward III, in order that she might cause no further trouble. Remarkable women, both of them, no doubt; but Queen Margaret cuts both a more glorious and a more pathetic figure.

We have met her already, or, at all events, we have met her mother, the fighting consort of the luckless King René; and the daughter was with the mother at the time of her campaign for her husband's Sicilian kingdom. At the time of her marriage all the omens seemed prosperous; but those omens were to prove deceptive. King Henry was a youth of great charm of character, most amiable and most cultivated, though, as it turned out, unequal to the rough task before him; he desired to live at peace with all the world, and his bride was the pledge of peace. But there was to be little peace in his time or hers: there were too many of those outstanding, unsolved problems which bring about "inevitable" wars.

There was, to begin with, the outstanding problem of the English occupation of French territory. Others had to follow the plough to which Jeanne d'Arc had set her hand; and there could be no enduring peace between France and England until France was definitely French. And then, of course, there was the problem of English distress and discontent which brought Jack Cade to London, where he arrogated, and for a brief space exercised, the right of chopping off the heads of the illustrious; and then there was the long duel, so sanguinary and so calamitous, between the Houses of Lancaster and York. Those were to be the salient events of the reign of a King and Queen of literary, artistic, and religious tastes: the founders of King's and Queens' colleges at Cambridge—the task of Queen Margaret being completed by Edward IV's consort, Queen Elizabeth, who had been one of her retinue. The arms of Queens' are still the arms of Anjou—its quarterings including the arms of the kingdoms of Hungary, the two Sicilies, Jerusalem, the county of Anjou, and the Duchies of Bar and Lorraine.

Poor Henry, as we know, was quite unfit to cope with the troubles which circumstances interposed between him and the life of pious and cultivated ease to which he aspired; but Queen Margaret had the energy which he lacked. She raised armies, rode with them, and, at times, even directed them; she passed to and

Stephen, and was beleaguered by Stephen in the old Norman castle which still stands at Oxford, and had to escape as best she could. The Chronicle of Abingdon tells us that "they let her down at night from the tower with ropes, and she stole out, and went on foot to Wallingford." From school, too, we carried, or ought to have carried away, the knowledge that Isabelle, daughter of Philippe le Bel, of France, and wife of Edward II of England, took up arms against her husband and his favourites, and was afterwards sent to a nunnery by her son, Edward III, in order that she might cause no further trouble. Remarkable women, both of them, no doubt; but Queen Margaret cuts both a more glorious and a more pathetic figure.

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Poor Henry, as we know, was quite unfit to cope with the troubles which circumstances interposed between him and the life of pious and cultivated ease to which he aspired; but Queen Margaret had the energy which he lacked. She raised armies, rode with them, and, at times, even directed them; she passed to and

fro across the Channel, seeking help in France and bringing it to England. She did not hesitate to disobey commands which the Duke of York sent to her in the King's name, saying: "If I were to obey him, the day would come when he would be very angry with me for having done so." She advanced to Wakefield, and showed a great talent for military tactics, so arranging her host as to catch the Duke of York's advance guard "like a fish entangled in a net." The Duke fell in the fight, and his head, encircled with a paste-board crown, was placed as a decoration on the walls of York.

A work like this, however, must not let itself be resolved into a *précis* of English history. Marches and counter-marches, victories and defeats, exile, return, and the renewal of exile —battles of St. Albans, Blore Heath, Northampton, Wakefield, Towton, Tewkesbury, Hexham, Barnet: these incidents, spread out over a period of some twenty years, may be studied in many books of which the most recommendable, perhaps, is Professor Oman's *Life of Warwick the King-maker*. Queen Margaret's cause, like the cause of the Maid of France, was to triumph in the end, but not until after her death. Another Lancastrian was to come into his own, if we may so call it without seeming to take a side, at the battle of Bosworth Field; but Queen Margaret had meanwhile suffered all the pangs of disappointed hope.

Her father, King René, would have liked to

help her, but could not: the sentimentalists, nevertheless, made it a grievance against him that he did not. His own troubadour sang scorn at him in his own hall:

"Awake, King René, awake! Suffer not your soul to be subdued by grief. Your daughter, the wife of King Henry, now weeps, and now kneels in piteous entreaty, but still contrives to smile."

Truly a daring ballad for a troubadour to sing, and a sorry one for a king to have to listen to—especially if he was not the only listener. But René nevertheless loved his daughter, and, though he could not take the field for her, secured her deliverance from captivity. We have a letter which he wrote her at a time when she was a widow and a prisoner, first in the Tower and afterwards in English country-houses:

"My child, may God help thee with His counsels, for rarely is the aid of man tendered in such reverse of fortune. When thou canst spare a thought from thy own misfortunes, think of mine; they are great, my daughter, and yet I would fain console thee."

Consolation was not for her; but René ceded his inheritance of Provence to Louis XI on condition that Louis should pay the ransom of 50,000 crowns which Edward IV demanded for his daughter, and so, at last, Queen Mar-

garet embarked at Sandwich and landed at Dieppe. She was the daughter of a King, the widow of a King, and the cousin of Louis XI, who was the most powerful monarch of his time; but she had fallen so low that, in the act of abdication which she had to sign, she had to describe herself, not as a Queen who abandoned royal claims, but merely as a widow who renounced her title to any inheritance from her husband:

"I, Margaret, formerly married in the kingdom of England, renounce all that I could lay claim to in England by the conditions of my marriage, with all my other possessions there, to Edward, now King of England."

And so to the place of exile, which she did not the less regard as a place of exile because France was her native land. Louis XI, though he had ransomed her, for a consideration, was no true friend, and showed no real sympathy. It did not suit him, for political reasons, to let her come to Paris to thank him for delivering her: he provided, instead, an escort to take her to her father. Her proud spirit bade her take offence and decline the escort, with the result that she narrowly escaped being murdered on her way through Normandy.

She came safely through that final peril, however, and reached her father's castle, at Reculée, near Angers, whence she presently removed to the castle of Dampierre, near

Saumur. Her father, being a poet, and also a painter, could find consolation for his own sufferings in the contemplation and creation of beautiful works of art—the writing of verse, and the illumination of Books of Hours; but there was no relief in that anodyne for his daughter. She had lived too active and agitated a life: she attached—unlike René—too great importance to the things which she had lost, after trying hard to keep them.

She was a broken woman: broken rather than bent. Louis XI, to whom René commended her on his death-bed, promised her a pension, but often forgot to pay it, so that she knew narrow circumstances, if not actual poverty. Her pride was abased; her health was ruined; and, with her health, her beauty also left her. The prize of beauty at tournaments had once been hers; but now the ravages of some loathsome skin disease began to make her hideous. Contemporary writers speak of her as becoming, in the end, a spectacle of horror. When she died, in 1482, she was buried in Angers cathedral; but no monument was erected there to her memory, beyond a portrait on a stained glass window. She was only fifty-two, as men count time, but very, very old in trouble and misfortune; and her lot was the more pathetic because it took historians and biographers so long to realise her character and do her justice.

With her death we are definitely and unques-

tionably clear of the Middle Age. We shall not meet another name as great until, nearly two hundred years later, we come to that Mademoiselle de Montpensier whom history knows as La Grande Mademoiselle; but there are other heroines of equal courage, albeit of less renown, whose exploits must be first reviewed. Those religious wars which rent France in the sixteenth century, and gave Paris to Henri IV at the price of a mass, brought forth a crop of them. It was a time of sieges; and almost every siege produced its heroine or heroines. The historians speak specially of the heroines of: Marseilles, Saint-Riquier, Péronne, Metz, Montélimar, Poitiers, La Rochelle, Sancerre, Livron, Saint-Lô, Aubigny, Cahors, Lille, Vitré, Autun, Montauban, Montpellier, Lamotte, Dôle, and Saint-Jean-de-Losne.

A long list truly: so long that these pages cannot possibly do full justice to all the exploits of all the heroines whose memories it recalls. We must pick and choose among them, reconstructing a personality where we can, quoting Brantôme, as often as Brantôme is suitable to quote.

CHAPTER XIV

The wars of religion at the time of the Reformation—Women who helped in the defence of besieged cities—Améliane du Puget—Jeanne Maillotte—Others—Louise Labé, the poetess—Kenau Hasselaar—Her services during the siege of Haarlem by the Spaniards.

THERE is no more need to take a side in speaking of the wars of religion than in speaking of the Wars of the Roses. Whatever the theological rights of the case, it has seldom been the hair-splittings of the theologians which have inspired women to take up arms. The thing which has fired their fury has been the menace to their homes rather than the menace to their creeds. They have taken part in the defence more often than in the attack of cities; and one can, in consequence, still regard them as womanly women even when one finds them wielding weapons of war. There is a long list of them, beginning, for the purposes of the present chapter, with Améliane du Puget of Marseilles, and ending with Kenau Hasselaar of Haarlem.

Améliane du Puget (*née* de Glandèves) was the daughter of the Governor and Chief Magistrate of Marseilles; and the date of her exploit was 1524, when the Constable de Bourbon, being at war with his King, laid siege to the

city. The Constable's guns breached the wall, and his men came pouring through the breach. The men of Marseilles withstood them as long as they could, but were about to yield, when, of a sudden, they received a reinforcement—a regiment of women headed by their Governor's daughter; and that reinforcement turned the scale, and drove the assailants back. More regular and leisurely siege operations were then commenced; and still Mlle Améliane and her company found work to do. When the enemy mined, they counter-mined, digging what was long known as the Tranchée des Dames, in the place where now stands the Boulevard des Dames. It is pleasant to relate that Mlle Améliane's heroism won her a proposal of marriage, and that she accepted it, and that her husband, Guillaume du Puget, added her name to his and called himself du Puget-Glandèves: a double-barrelled name which has a more interesting origin than most. Let those who desire to know more hunt out Mlle de Grandpré's novel, *Une héroïne*. They will read in it of other heroines besides Améliane—to wit, Gabrielle and Claire de Laval, who also raised regiments of Amazons for the defence of the Phocæan city.

In 1535 we encounter a similar story of prowess on the part of Marie Fourré and other ladies of the town of Saint-Riquier. That town had only a garrison of 100 men when the Count of Nassau laid siege to it with 2,000 Flemish

veterans. The women helped in the defence, and so effectively that an interesting correspondence passed between the Count and the Archduchess from whom he held his commission:

"I am astonished," the Archduchess wrote, "to see that you are so long in taking the place. It is, I understand, nothing more than a dove-cote."

"Madam," the Count replied, "it is true that the place is nothing more than a dove-cote; but the doves within it are exceedingly difficult to take. The female doves are every whit as courageous and formidable as the males."

So that the Count had to raise the siege and retire, leaving behind him a standard which had been taken by Marie-Fourré, wife of M. de Poix, the tax-collector, and a worthy successor of Jeanne Hachette of Beauvais.

The siege of Niort, in 1559, brought out the Comtesse de Lude, of whom it is recorded that, "distressed to observe that the captain and his men were inadequately animated by martial ardour, she overwhelmed those who had executed a retreat with the bitterest reproaches, and promised the brave that she would give them, as the reward of their valour, scarves embroidered by the best-looking ladies in the town": an incitement to valour which produced the desired result, and compelled the raising of the siege. And then, just ten years

later, the siege of Montélimar by Admiral Coligny brought out Marguerite Delaye, who lost an arm in the fighting, and in whose honour an armless statue was erected in a public place.

Sometimes, though not always, the valour of such valiant women extorted the admiration and compliments even of their enemies: the valour of Marie de Brabançon did so. With only fifty men to help her, she defended her castle of Bénégon against a beleaguering force of 2,000; but, in the end, she was taken prisoner by one Montaré, and held to ransom. But Charles IX would not have it so. "He sent strict orders to Montaré and the other captains not to accept one penny of ransom from this great-hearted lady, but to escort her back, with all honour, to the castle from which they had taken her, and to give her her liberty, and to excuse her from carrying out any of her promises."

Charles IX, it is clear, admired Marie de Brabançon as much as Henri IV admired Madeleine de Saint-Nectaire, Comtesse de Miremont, who, in 1584, commanded a company of sixty Huguenot cavaliers—cavaliers who, writes that gallant Huguenot, Agrippa d'Aubigny, "followed her flag and that of love at the same time—every one of them being passionately enamoured of her, though no one of them was even able to boast that she had so much as let him kiss her." Whereat the *Vert-Gallant* exclaimed in his enthusiasm: "*Ventre saint-*

gris! If I were not King, I would like to be Mlle de Saint-Nectaire."

The ladies of Livron, of whom we will speak next, are famous for the way in which they expressed their contempt for the assailants of their town: they took their work up on to the ramparts, and sat there with their knitting-needles and their spinning-wheels, to show that they were not in the least alarmed. As for the ladies of La Rochelle, which stood a siege in 1572, we cannot do better than observe them through the eyes of Brantôme:

"Many of the people of the town," Brantôme writes, "put in an appearance on the ramparts, and on the walls. Above all, there were seen there about one hundred ladies of good condition, the noblest, the richest, the fairest, all attired, from head to foot, in white garments, of fine Dutch cloth, which made them very beautiful to look upon. They were thus dressed because they were at work on the fortifications, digging trenches, and carrying loads of earth. Other clothes would have been both soiled and damaged, but these only needed to be sent to the wash; so that they were very conspicuous in them. We others were charmed at the sight of these beautiful ladies; and some of us, I assure you, found it more amusing than anything else that was going on. They took no pains to keep out of sight, but were quite willing that we should see them; for they came to

the very edge of the rampart, looking so beautiful and elegant that one desired, not only to gaze at them, but to embrace them."

Which may or may not have been the impression which the ladies were most anxious to produce. There is, at any rate, a feminine note in the story; which is not surprising, seeing that it is Brantôme who tells it. And there is also a feminine note in the story of Jeanne Mailotte, innkeeper of Lille, in whose house of refreshment enemies who hoped to take the town by surprise and loot it had arranged their rendezvous. Jeanne, overhearing their conversation, penetrated their designs, and gave the alarm, contributing her own very important share to their discomfiture by throwing the ashes of the kitchen fire into their eyes while they were looking for their weapons. We may quote from an old poem which enshrines her memory:

> Mais leur hôtesse, en vaillante Amazone,
> Créniant Dieu créateur et hainant les Hurlus,
> Contre les hérétiques alla s'en courir sus,
> L'allebarde entonstant au corps de leur personne.

But what to say about Louise Labé, the poetess, who belongs to the period with which we are dealing, but was associated with the Renaissance rather than the Reformation, which was, in the view of many, the Renaissance on its religious side?

Certainly it is not as a woman warrior that Louise Labé is most famous. Her glory depends

upon her poems, her culture, and her beauty; and it is as *la belle Cordière*—the beautiful wife of the rope-maker—that the world has decided to remember her. She presided over a literary *salon* at Lyons,—the birth-place of two other eminent *salonières*, Mlle de Lespinasse, and Mme Récamier. Still, there is a story of her having ridden out to war and taken part in the siege of Perpignan, in the reign of François I. It is true that M. Charles Boy, the editor of her collected works, insists that she never took part in any more perilous military operation than a tournament; but the legend is rather well accredited that she went campaigning under the *nom de guerre* of Captain Loys. A young officer, it is said, turned troubadour for love of her, and sang nightly serenades outside her tent. It is added that her heart was impenetrable to the assault, and that her lover, despairing of her favours, went to the wars in Italy, where he fell in battle.

Perhaps it is true: there is a couplet in Louise Labé's works which the memory of the incident may have inspired:

> Mais quoi? Amour ne put longuement voir,
> Mon cœur n'aimant que Mars et le savoir.

Which is like the language of a gifted, but militant, suffrage-seeker from the Bedford College for Women, but is flagrantly at variance with common report, and with the general tone of the woman warrior's later poetical works.

For common report, which perhaps only represents the envy and malice of less successful women, speaks of Louise Labé, after her return from the tented field, as passionate, volatile, and indifferent to the prescriptions of propriety; while she herself utters what has all the air of being at once the confession and the justification of a fault:

A faire gain jamais je ne soumis
Mentir, tromper, et abuser autrui,
Tant m'a déplu que de médire de lui.
Mais si en moi rien y a d'imparfait,
Qu'on blâme amour, c'est lui seul qui me l'a fait

If she has erred, that is to say, the fault is love's, not hers; but the excuse accords with the declaration of one who knew her that "she preferred men of letters to noble lords, and would rather entertain one of the former gratuitously than one of the latter for the reward of a large sum of money." And it would certainly seem, if poetry be evidence, that Louise Labé took her levities, such as they may have been, very seriously, and that some man—if not several men—caused her to suffer. One gathers that from the passionate sonnet which begins:

Ne reprenez, Dames, si j'ay aimé;
Si j'ay senti mile torches ardantes,
Mile travaux, mile douleurs mordantes;
Si en pleurant j'ay mon temp consumé

The passionate sonnet which ends:

Et gardez-vous d'estre plus malheureuses!

Evidently Louise Labé was a worthy daughter of the Renaissance: a worthy star in the Pléiade. Her appearance in this gallery of women warriors is really accidental—the caprice of a high-spirited girl who knew that she cut a fine figure on horse-back. We enter a very different world when we pass to Holland and review the valiant deeds of Kenau Hasselaar during the memorable siege of Haarlem by the Spaniards.

For the story of the siege itself—the circumstances which led up to it, and the horrors which marked its progress and its conclusion—the reader must be referred to Motley's graphic pages. There he will read how, for seven months, 4,000 men—mostly burghers with only a stiffening of soldiers—kept 30,000 Spaniards at bay; how assaults were repelled, and sorties successfully made; how mines were dug and met by counter-mines; how relieving forces were cut up, and traitors were hanged, and prisoners were murdered; how the garrison flung their last loaves of bread over the walls, to give the impression that supplies were still plentiful, while they were living on cats and dogs and rats and mice and weeds and nettles; how the final surrender was followed by military executions on the scale of massacres—hundreds of victims being tied back to back and drowned in Haarlem Meer. But of Kenau Hasselaar he will only read these brief and insufficient sentences:

"The garrison at last numbered about 1,000 pioneers or delvers, 3,000 fighting men, and about 300 fighting women. The last was a most efficient corps, all females of respectable character, armed with sword, musket, and dagger. The chief, Kenau Hasselaar, was a widow of distinguished family and unblemished reputation, about forty-seven years of age, who, at the head of her Amazons, participated in many of the most fiercely contested actions of the siege, both within and without the walls."

No more than that; but though that suffices for Motley, it does not suffice for the Dutch, least of all if they are citizens of Haarlem. Kenau Hasselaar is for the citizens of Haarlem what Jeanne d'Arc is for the citizens of Orleans; and all that is known or knowable about her is set forth in a little book entitled *Beroemde Nederlandsche Vrouwen*, written for children, and bearing a motto from the works of our own Samuel Smiles upon its title-page.

Kenau Hasselaar, we learn from this source, was Vrouw Borst, forty-seven years of age, as Motley rightly says, and of a family which, if distinguished, was, at all events, in trade, and the mother of three children—two girls and a boy. Her husband had been a ship-builder. Kenau had inherited his yard, with its various contents of timber, ropes, canvas, tar, and pitch: her nephew, Pieter Hasselaar, was one of the standard-bearers of the Haarlem garrison,

and a renowned marksman. Pieter came to his aunt with the news—also proclaimed by the ringing of alarm-bells and the rolling of drums—that the Spaniards were coming, and that the assault was imminent. Kenau Hasselaar went into the yard and lighted a large fire.

She knew, as everybody knew, what would be wanted for the repulsion of the storming party: plenty of boiling water, boiling oil, boiling pitch, and molten lead. She filled great cauldrons with such things, and set them on to boil; and then she and her little daughter Gwrtje carried the cauldrons to the walls, where their contents were found very useful in hastening the descent of the Spaniards from their scaling-ladders. Wooden hoops, dipped in pitch, set alight, and dropped over their heads, were particularly disconcerting to them. Little Gwrtje found time, in the midst of the excitement, to complain that the pitch made her little hands horribly dirty; but Kenau laughed at her, and told her not to be a silly child.

Then Kenau reflected: Why should the women of Haarlem stand idle while the men of Haarlem risked their lives? She discussed that question with her cousins and her neighbours; she lay awake all night, thinking of it. Decidedly the women could do something, and ought to do it; why should she not herself organise their forces? She opened her Bible, as her daily practice was, for guidance; and

her eyes lighted upon a passage in the twentieth chapter of the Second Book of Chronicles :

" O our God, wilt Thou not judge them ? for we have no might against this great company that cometh against us ; neither know we what to do ; but our eyes are upon Thee. . . .

" Then upon Jahaziel, the son of Zechariah, . . . came the spirit of the Lord in the midst of the congregation,

" And he said, Hearken ye, all Judah, and ye inhabitants of Jerusalem, and thou king Jehoshaphat, Thus saith the Lord unto you, Be not afraid nor dismayed by reason of this great multidude ; for the battle is not yours, but God's.

" To-morrow go ye down against them."

It was as if an oracle had answered one who sought advice ; and Kenau Hasselaar now knew what she must do. She went, at once, to the military governor of the town, and proposed to raise a regiment of women who should help to guard the walls. He agreed, and more than 300 women instantly volunteered to serve ; they were to dress as women, but also to wear steel corselets. So a meeting was held at which weapons were distributed—muskets, and daggers, and pikes—and officers were duly elected. Kenau Hasselaar herself was placed in chief command ; the position of second-in-command was given to the burgomaster's wife. Maria van Schoten, a girl

of seventeen, and Maria van der Laan were appointed subaltern officers, and the bearing of the banners was entrusted to Henrika van Vliet, and Gertrui van Brederode, who were accounted the belles of the town. They all marched off to the walls, where they were welcomed with a blast on the trumpets.

Their first work was to buttress the weak walls with timber. Presently they were engaged in mining operations; and ultimately they took part in the sallies. Kenau Hasselaar's battle-cry—"For Haarlem, for Holland!"—became the battle-cry of all. The Governor complimented them, saying that the women fought like men, and Kenau made answer: "They only defend what they love best: that is their courage." Their courage is not held in the less honour because their defence was vain. A messenger, with his nose and ears cut off, arrived with the news that the Stadhouder's attempt to send a force to raise the siege had failed; and there was nothing for it but to yield on such terms as the Spaniards would grant.

Their hands were heavy,—they gave out that every one who harboured a refugee would be hanged; but Kenau Hasselaar, by whatever means, escaped their vengeance. Her subsequent career was obscure and inconspicuous. We know that her grateful fellow countrymen gave her a public appointment as a tax-collector, but we know nothing else.

CHAPTER XV

The Wars of the Fronde—The Fronde of the Parlement and the Fronde of the Noble Lords—Part played in the war by Mlle de Montpensier—Her friendship for the great Condé—Her dash for Orleans—Her return to Paris.

THE Wars of the Fronde furnish the frame of the picture of which Mlle de Montpensier is to be the central figure; and it would require all the skill of a competent expert to unravel the tangled skein of their complications. In this place we must try to make a very little unravelling suffice; the first point to be made clear being that the word *fronde* means a sling, and that the word *frondeur*, which is obviously derived from it, first came into popular use in consequence of a riot, of no political importance, in which slings were the weapons used. The *frondeurs* who belong to history were all those who fought against the King—Louis XIV, who was then a child—his mother, Anne of Austria, and his minister, Cardinal Mazarin, in the civil wars which raged intermittently from 1648 to 1652.

It is a question whether we should speak of two Wars of the Fronde, or of one war divided into parts: historians, at all events, distinguish

between the Fronde of the Parlement and the Fronde of the Noble Lords. The French Parlement, however, it must be borne in mind, was not the exact equivalent of an English Parliament. Membership of it was hereditary, and dependent upon the payment of certain taxes; its functions were primarily judicial, though it also possessed the privilege of addressing respectful "remonstrances" to the King concerning the proceedings of his Government. It was disposed to press that privilege, having before its eyes the instructive precedent of the English Parliament, which had defied and deposed its King, and was about to send him to the block.

And there were genuine grievances. French foreign policy had prospered; but the domestic condition of France was far from prosperous. The people were poor; the taxes were heavy; Cardinal Mazarin was observed to be pocketing more than his fair share of them. So that there was a disposition, on the part of the populace of Paris, not merely to back the Parlement, but to go a good deal further than the Parlement had any idea of going. Hence, in the first place, riots, and the famous Day of the Barricades; hence, in the second place, the retreat of the royal family from Paris to Saint-Germain, and the reconquest of Paris, on their behalf, by the great Condé, who fell upon the adventurous Parisians at Charenton, when they attempted a sortie, and routed them. Then in August, 1649, the Court was able to re-establish

itself at the Tuileries. That was the end of Act I : the Fronde of the Parlement.

Act II—the Fronde of the Noble Lords—was due to the great Condé's exorbitant pride and pretensions. He wanted preferments and advantages for all his friends ; he also wanted to have a right of veto on all public appointments, and on the marriages of Mazarin's nieces. The Court stood a great deal from him, but finally laid him by the heels in the prison of Vincennes. His friends, including the great Turenne, took the matter up : he was released, and there was a second civil war. The war was not, this time, to any extent, a popular movement—the points at issue were mainly, if not solely, personal. To the mass of the people, the fighting was a nuisance, interrupting industry and reducing the industrious to destitution ; at the most they took such an interest in it as the spectators take in a foot-ball match. Among the actual combatants—and especially among the leaders—there was a great deal of bribery and corruption, intriguing, treachery, and changing of sides. It is all very intricate ; but we need attempt no further relation of anything connected with it, except Mlle de Montpensier's feats of arms.

She was the daughter of Louis XIII's brother, Gaston d'Orléans ; consequently Anne of Austria was her aunt, and Louis XIV was her cousin. She was high-spirited : of the type of the young women who, in our own day, compete with men

at golf and tennis, go shooting or salmon fishing with them, and ride to hounds with them—a type which attracted more attention then, than now, for the simple reason that it was rarer. People admired and applauded her because she kept things lively, and gave them the excitement of wondering what she would be up to next. The populace, in particular, cherished the sort of enthusiasm for her which the modern populace cherishes for the champions who distinguish themselves in athletic sports: she was often the idol of Paris.

She was romantic with it all, but in a style of her own: far more romantic than sentimental. In the end, she was to love, and even to marry, beneath her, losing her heart to that remarkable adventurer, Lauzun; but that romance belongs to a period of her life with which we have nothing to do. In her youth she had many suitors (for she was rich as well as attractive); but no love-affair in which her heart would appear to have been engaged. Romance only served her, in these days, as the hand-maid of ambition. She was solicited, but was not to be persuaded, to marry our own Charles II, and help him to recover his kingdom. She had some thought of becoming Condé's second wife; but Condé's first wife recovered from the attack of erysipelas which was expected to carry her off when the proposal was under consideration. A more brilliant idea was that she should marry Louis XIV.

Louis was only ten, and Mlle de Montpensier was twenty-one when that project was first discussed; but she was willing to wait for him. He liked her well enough; there would have been nothing impossible in the arrangement if the Court had smiled on it. Objections were raised, however, and Mlle de Montpensier conceived a further brilliant idea: to force the hands of her enemies by joining the party of the Fronde. Her marriage with the King, it seemed to her, might be made one of the conditions of peace. There was no reason why it should not have been, if the war had had a different issue; but there is no need to anticipate.

For some time Mlle de Montpensier had been on bad terms with Condé; and the first scene in which we obtain a characteristic glimpse of her is that of her reconciliation with him. She draws the picture herself in her Memoirs:

"Compliments finished, we admitted the mutual aversion which we had previously felt for one another. He confessed that he had been delighted to hear that I had the small-pox, and had hoped that it would mark or disfigure me, and, in fact, that he could not have detested me more than he did. I, on my part, told him that I had never been so pleased as when I heard that he was in prison; that I had hoped that he would be sent there, and had never thought of him without wishing him evil. This

explanation, which took a long time, amused the company immensely, and concluded with expressions of sincere friendship on both sides."

It concluded, in fact, with the conditional proposal of marriage already referred to; and there is a fine, frank sincerity about it which disarms criticism. From that date onwards, in spite of the impossibility of concluding the proposed marriage, Mlle de Montpensier was, as the Queen said, *furieusement frondeuse*; and we may skip all intermediate incidents and come to the adventure which constitutes her title to inclusion in this gallery.

The royal army was advancing on Orleans. Gaston d'Orléans was the liege lord of the town; but no great confidence was felt in its loyalty to him. The townsmen, in fact, very much desired to be left alone while their liege lord and his King settled their quarrels elsewhere; their desire was simply to cultivate their gardens, and not to stand a siege. It was important that some member of the family should go to Orleans in order to bring them to a better frame of mind. Gaston d'Orléans ought to have gone; but he made excuses, and the matter was settled over his head. At a supper-party, an officer whispered to his daughter: "We are in luck: it is you who are to go." She said her prayers, according to the practice of the age, and made her prepara-

tions, putting on a plumed hat, and a riding habit of grey, embroidered with gold, and driving off in her coach, at about three o'clock in the afternoon. The people cheered her, shouting, "Point de Mazarin!" An escort of five hundred horsemen met her; and, when her coach broke down, she mounted a horse and rode with them. They offered her the chief command, and she not only took it, but exercised it, giving orders for the holding up of couriers and the confiscation of their despatches. One has the impression, not of a heroine, with a fixed idea, sacrificing her ease and risking her life for a great cause, but rather of a jolly sportswoman coming to the conclusion that the game of war is ever so much more amusing than the game of hockey.

Regarding war as a game, however, she played her game with great spirit. An emissary from Orleans who begged her to seek a lodging outside the gate, on the ground that her entrance into the town was the one thing certain to provoke the King to attack it, met with a discouraging reception. "Nothing," she assured the messenger, "inspirits the people more than to see persons of my quality expose themselves to danger"; and she further assured him that he need not tremble for her. At the worst, she was only likely to be arrested, and "in that case I shall be in the hands of men who speak my language, who know me, and even in captivity will show me the respect due

to my birth." As for any possible danger to the citizens of Orleans, that was a branch of the subject which does not seem to have troubled her in the least.

So she went on, and found the gates of Orleans closed against her. She demanded that they should be opened, but the answer of the garrison was evasive. The people cheered, the soldiers saluted, the Governor begged her to accept cakes and sweetmeats which he lowered to her from a window; but the bolts were not withdrawn. "Very well. I shall either break the gates down or climb over the wall," said Mademoiselle; but there was no response to that menace except low and elaborate bows. Whereupon Mademoiselle walked on until she came to the Loire, where she found boatmen who were willing, for a consideration, to help her. They banged at one of the gates which opened on the quay, and knocked a hole in it.

There was no fighting, no escalade even, in the ordinary sense: it was merely a case of a determined young woman insisting upon her own way and getting it. Only passive resistance was offered; and we may take it that no other kind of resistance was either intended or expected. Seeing that Mademoiselle de Montpensier entered the town by crawling through a hole in the gate, unsupported by any armed force, nothing would have been easier than either to tap her on the head and drive her

back, or else to haul her through the hole and take her prisoner. But she had friends within, and her persistence commanded universal admiration. She had no sooner got into the town after this farcical attempt to storm it than she was "chaired" and carried through the streets in triumph. "I thought I should have died of laughing," is the gay conclusion of her narrative of the incident.

The farce, nevertheless, was not without its military value. There had been a race for the possession of Orleans, and Mlle de Montpensier had won the race. She had the satisfaction of pointing out that fact to the representatives of the royal forces who arrived and demanded admission on the following day, and with whom she held converse from the top of a tower. "I informed them," she says, "that I was mistress in Orleans, and that there was no longer any hope there for the Mazarins." But she was only mistress of Orleans in a very limited sense. Compliments and congratulations poured in upon her from her father and from Condé: she was the new Maid of Orleans, the worthy granddaughter of Henri IV, etc., etc.; but the authorities of the town were, on the whole, more polite than compliant. They kept her regularly supplied with cakes and comfits, they vaguely promised obedience to all her commands; but they nevertheless pursued their own policy. Their welcome was for ladies only of the Condé party: no

soldiers, no generals, no princes, even, could be admitted. "I got very angry," she writes. "I lost my temper. I scolded them. I cried."

In particular, she scolded M. de Sourdis, the Governor of the town, who retorted by suspending his pleasant practice of sending her a parcel of sweetmeats every morning; but she made her peace with him—one of her conditions, conveyed to him by the persuasive tongue of the Bishop, being that he should send her all the confectionery which he had withheld during the period of estrangement. "So that I gained a good deal," she explains, "by composing my dispute with him." But inaction, even on a diet of bonbons, bored her. She explored the town; she visited the churches; she played skittles in her garden; but these amusements soon ceased to amuse her. She wanted to be up and doing—to play at soldiers properly, with Condé for her playmate; so, as his armies could not come to join her, she rode off to join them, nobody presuming to interfere with her movements. The soldiers cheered her; Condé spoke of her march as "worthy of the great Gustavus Adolphus"; when she proposed to pray, a military band escorted her to church. "The effect," she says, "was very fine."

And so back to Paris, with Condé sitting beside her in the coach.

Her father was annoyed. He was a father

whose chief desire was for a quiet life; whose instinct it was, when any crisis called for action or decision, to go to bed with the gout. He had no followers, though there were those who wished to push him along in front, and even ladies who followed the profession of gallantry ventured, when he walked abroad, to stop him in the street and tell him what he ought to do. Naturally, therefore, his daughter was not afraid of him. She "called him to order as if he had been a dog"; and she thoroughly enjoyed her popularity. Condé, indeed, did not take her into his confidence as completely as she imagined; but she was acclaimed wherever she appeared. She was, she tells us, "like a Queen of Paris; . . . held in the highest honour and the greatest consideration"; and presently she had, and seized, her chance of rendering Condé a real military service.

An instinct warned her that she would be wanted, and that the call would be a sudden one. She had been feeling unwell and had been meaning to take medicine; but a timely premonition bade her postpone the treatment, in order that she might be in a condition to "make herself useful." Glory first and medicine afterwards, should be her motto. So she threw the dose away; and when she was wanted, she was ready.

It was a scorching July day. Condé had been fighting outside the walls of Paris, and was being beaten. The wounded were already ar-

riving within the city walls; the routed were about to try to follow them. Everything depended upon the attitude of Paris. Condé would need the help of all his friends; and Mlle de Montpensier was to prove herself the most valuable friend he had.

CHAPTER XVI

Attack on Paris by Turenne—Mlle de Montpensier points the guns on his army—Disappointment of her matrimonial ambitions—Peace concluded without her consent—Fear, flight, and nervous breakdown.

PARIS, on the whole, favoured Condé and the Fronde; but Paris did not speak with a single voice, and there were limitations to its sympathy. *Delirant reges, plectuntur Achivi.* Paris had already suffered enough to realise the truth of that saying; and, though it accepted a certain amount of suffering as inevitable, it had no desire to suffer more than it could help. It was bad enough that business should be suspended, and supplies scarce, while the streets were crowded with starving fugitives from the devastated country; they wished to avert the crowning horror of being besieged, and stormed, and sacked. And that horror, they feared, would infallibly befall them if they opened their gates to Condé and then slammed them in the face of Turenne—now Condé's enemy, though once his friend. The apprehension was specially acute among serious people: merchants, tradesmen, town councillors, and the like.

Condé, of course, had never thought of that;

and Mlle de Montpensier did not think of it either. To her, as to him, the masses were just the masses: people of whose interests it behoved no one to consider; people from whom loyalty was due; mere pawns in the game of intrigue played by the great. Condé's duty was to himself, and Mademoiselle's duty was to Condé. Reluctant adherents must be shamed, or persuaded, or coerced into adhering: that was Mademoiselle's simple view of the matter. Condé had appealed to her, and he should not appeal in vain. There is a point of view, of course, from which her proceedings seem selfish and indefensible; but her energy—so long as it lasted, for we shall come presently to a collapse—is worthy of all our admiration.

The appeal for help was addressed, in the first instance, to her father: an appeal to compel the opening of the gates of Paris to Condé's retreating army. The invariable effect of an appeal of that sort on Gaston d'Orléans was to bring on an attack of the gout; but Mademoiselle de Montpensier knew that gout, and had no sympathy with it. She had the less sympathy with it because it did not, this time, send her father to bed, but only kept him indoors. She stormed at him; she called in her friends to help her storm at him. He was induced, at last, not to act himself, but to delegate his authority to his daughter, and to despatch her to the Hôtel de Ville, there to give orders, "as his representative."

She dashed off, and found the town councillors in session, and a howling mob assembled outside the building, threatening the City Fathers so violently that not a man among them dared to look out of window for fear of being shot at. She burst in upon them, and demanded instant armed succour for her friend, and an order for the opening of the gates.

"Picture it, gentlemen!" she cried impetuously. "Even now, while you confabulate, the Prince is in peril in your faubourgs. What grief, what everlasting shame for Paris, if he should die there for want of help! It is your place to help him: make haste and do your duty!"

Her eloquence, if not her arguments, overcame them. She obtained her order for Condé's admission, and galloped off in her coach to the Porte Saint-Antoine, outside of which the battle was still raging furiously. A procession of the wounded met her: La Rochefoucauld, of the *Maxims*, Guitaut, Valon, who had been with her on the ride to Orleans—scores of the noblest of the nobility of France, who had been fighting the last fight of the feudal aristocracy against the King. She opened the gate, and Condé entered, dust on his face, his hair matted, and his shirt and collar soaked with blood, exclaiming, "You behold a desperate man; I have lost all my friends."

But, even so, the army was not safe, and

Mlle de Montpensier had not finished her day's work. The fighting continued, before the eyes of the *bourgeoisie* assembled on the walls; and Mademoiselle climbed to the top of one of the towers of the Bastille, to get a better view of it. She saw Turenne's cavalry about to charge the rear-guard of the retreating host; and, on her own responsibility, she gave the order to point the guns on them, and fire, with the result that their front ranks were swept away and their advance was checked. The volley, according to Mazarin, "killed her husband"—destroyed for ever, that is to say, her chance of marrying Louis XIV; but it also saved the Army of the Fronde. "You are our deliverer," the men cried, as they passed beneath her window and saluted.

It was a remarkable personal triumph. Mademoiselle was under the impression that it was also a great triumph for the cause; but the historian, looking backwards, discerns in it the beginning of the discomfiture of the party. Condé was under the impression that the City Fathers esteemed it a privilege to risk their lives for him, and desired nothing better than to place him at the head of a provisional Government. What they did desire was to conclude a peace, whether with his approval or without it; and they said so. The mob favoured Condé, and attacked the City Fathers in the Hôtel de Ville, apparently with Condé's connivance. Mademoiselle achieved another

triumph by driving to the rescue; and the people cried: "God bless you! Whatever you do is done well." But there had been killed and wounded; and there had also been an appearance of treachery. The City Fathers had fallen, it was said, into a *guet-apens*. So that the better opinion of Paris became adverse to Condé, and his power crumbled.

For some weeks longer Mademoiselle continued to play at soldiers, with negotiations for peace going on behind her back. It is said that officers fought duels for the honour of holding commissions in regiments under her command; and she dreamed grandiose dreams of military glory. She would raise a great army at her own expense, and call it the Army of Mademoiselle. She would seize a fortress somewhere, and intimidate the King into treating, —and perhaps into marrying her. Or perhaps she would marry Condé—whose wife was again ill—and make him King. But there was no actual fighting; and that fact also gave the City Fathers food for reflection. Not, of course, that fighting was what they craved for, but that a camp in which "nothing was going on except luncheon parties and flirtations" outraged their sense of the fitness of things and the proper relation between ends and means. If the soldiers did not fight how was this war, which was such a nuisance to men of business, to be brought to an end?

They decided to end it by sending a deputation to the King, inviting him to return to Paris. Mademoiselle appealed to her father to hang them—which, if we take a purely military view of the matter, was obviously the proper thing to do; but Gaston d'Orléans was secretly on their side, and had opened his own negotiations with his nephew. So that the King came into his own again, almost as quietly as if he had never been kept out of it, and Condé withdrew to the armies which held out for him in the East of France, and Gaston d'Orléans obeyed an injunction to leave Paris, and, as Paris sang:

> Mademoiselle son aînée,
> Disparut, la même journée.

It was the end of the great adventure, and it was also the end of Mademoiselle's heroism. She was frightened by the receipt of anonymous letters, warning her that she was likely to be arrested. She asked no questions; she was deaf to faithful friends who implored her to keep cool. She simply fled, as the wicked flee—"when no man pursueth"—screaming at every one who attempted to delay her retreat, in a coach without armorial bearings, driven by a coachman without livery—that is to say, in the seventeenth-century equivalent of a four-wheeler. Every horseman who passed her on the road appeared to her terrified imagination a soldier sent to capture her; she put on a

mask which she represented as designed to cover the ravages of small-pox, and called herself Madame Dupré.

Her secretary begged her father to receive her in his own retreat at Blois; but he would not. Her energy was always compromising him, and he was tired of being compromised. "I don't want her," he said; "and, if she comes, I shall turn her out." Condé, on the other hand, wrote to her from the frontier begging her to join him. "I place my fortresses and my army at your disposition," he wrote, "and MM. de Lorraine and de Fuensaldagne do the same"; but she declined the invitation, having played at soldiers long enough to have discovered that the game was attended with unpleasant risks. It seemed better to repair to her own château at Saint-Fargeau, and wait there until the clouds rolled by.

She was in no real danger—the King had written to promise her "safety and liberty"; but her confidence had been too severely shaken to be restored so easily. So she hurried on, travelling far into the night, in fear not only of the royal troops but also of irresponsible marauders, who did, in fact, succeed in stealing some of her ready money and a portion of her secretary's wardrobe. And then, at last:

"We arrived," she writes, "at Saint-Fargeau at two in the morning. I had to dismount, because the bridge was broken down. I entered

an old house which had neither doors nor windows, but had grass growing knee-high in the courtyard. It was a terrible shock. They led me into a wretched room, propped up in the middle by a beam. I was so annoyed and horrified that I began to cry."

Hysterics after heroism. The anti-climax is so obvious that there is no need to dwell on it; and, of course, the tears evoked by the apprehension, not of danger, but of the discomfort of spending a night in a cold and empty house, without a bed to lie upon, are a proof that Mademoiselle, masculine as she had appeared to be, had her share of the weaknesses of her sex. One is helped by them to believe that when, a few years later, she met Queen Christina of Sweden at Fontainebleau, she was, to the amazement of that northern monarch, frightened by the display of fire-works with which the entertainment concluded.

That story, however, belongs to a later date, and we have nothing to do with it; just as we have nothing to do with the interesting story of Mademoiselle's love for Lauzun. Our business is still with the Wars of the Fronde, and the parts which other women played in them: rôles to which Mazarin himself rendered homage in conversation with the Spanish Prime Minister:

"You Spaniards," he said, "are lucky. Love is the only thing with which your women

concern themselves. It is very different in France. We have three women here who would be capable of governing or subverting three great kingdoms: the Duchesse de Longueville, the Princess Palatine, and the Duchesse de Chevreuse."

He might have added that the most enterprising of these was Madame de Longueville.

CHAPTER XVII

Madame de Longueville, sister of the great Condé—Her attempt to raise Normandy—Her escape from Dieppe—Her defence of Bordeaux—Her repentance in her old age, and her devout religious observances.

MADAME DE LONGUEVILLE was Condé's sister. There is little to be said about her husband except that he was several years her senior, and had a considerable, though not an immoderate reputation for gallantry. La Rochefoucauld, of the *Maxims*, was her lover—though neither her first lover nor her last; but we need not go too deeply into that, though a democratic pamphleteer might make great play with the connection between the wars which ravaged France and the love-affairs of the leaders of French society. All that concerns us in our study of the vanities of the Duchesse de Longueville is the light thereby thrown upon the causes, and springs, and motives of the Fronde of the Noble Lords.

All the Noble Lords, and the Noble Ladies also, wanted something for themselves as the condition of their faithful allegiance to Anne of Austria and Mazarin. Some of them wanted money, others public appointments, others,

again, court privileges. Madame de Longueville wanted the government of the Pont de L'Arche, in Normandy, for her husband, "the honours of the Louvre"—the right, that is to say, of driving a coach into the courtyard of any palace in which the King happened to be residing—for her lover, and the *tabouret*, or privilege of sitting, instead of standing, at royal receptions, for her lover's sister, and another lady in whom her brother was interested. To her, and to those about her, it seemed perfectly natural, not only that Noble Lords should fight for these privileges, if they could not obtain them by intrigue, but also that the common people should suspend their ordinary occupations and fight for them on their behalf. That, in the view of the *ancienne noblesse*, whose feudal pride Louis XI had not entirely broken, was what common people were for.

We first, therefore, discover Madame de Longueville behind the scenes, pulling the wires with great dexterity, foreseeing civil war, and preparing for it. It is a characteristic fact that, after having given provocation in compliance with the claims of love, she strengthened her position by lending her countenance to a secret marriage. The young Duc de Richelieu, who was still a minor, and one of the richest *partis* in France, had been persuaded that he wanted to marry Madame de Pons, one of the ladies for whom Madame de Longueville had obtained a *tabouret*—a buxom widow who was

nearly double his age. Anne of Austria and the boy's guardian not unnaturally withheld their consent; and Madame de Longueville saw her opportunity. If the boy would seize Havre and hold it for the House of Condé, she would arrange for his marriage to take place at her residence at Trie near Beauvais. The boy, being love-sick, agreed; and the bargain was duly struck and carried out. That defiance of the royal authority was the last straw which broke the royal patience. The arrest of Condé, of which we have already spoken, followed.

Not only Condé and his brother Conti were to have been arrested: the same sentence was launched against La Rochefoucauld and Madame de Longueville herself. But Madame de Longueville, though commonly regarded as a languorous beauty, was a woman of energy and resource: she saw what was coming, and got away before it came. She was ordered to repair to the Palais-Royal, the intention being to arrest her on her arrival; but, though she started for the Palais-Royal, she did not reach that destination. Instead, she drove to the house of the Princess Palatine, where she borrowed the Princess Palatine's coach, and set off for Normandy, accompanied by La Rochefoucauld, proposing there to raise the flag of rebellion in her brother's interest. She had a small escort with her, sufficient to arrest a royal courier, whom she met upon the road, despoil

him of his despatches, take him to Rouen as a prisoner, and lock him up in a room in one of the inns.

It seemed to the feudal mind of the Duchesse de Longueville the most natural thing in the world that Normans should wish to kill and be killed on account of any affront put upon her or any member of her family; and she began her campaign by sending the stolen despatches to the Rouen Parlement, with her compliments. She encountered, however, that hard, business-like, middle-class opinion which always objects to the derangement of its commerce by quarrels with which it has no direct concern: a new spirit, but nevertheless a growing one. The Parlement not only sent officers to demand the release of the courier whom Madame de Longueville had locked up in his bedroom, but also issued a decree prohibiting "all persons, of whatever quality and condition, from holding any armed assemblages, without the King's explicit orders, under pain of death." It was a hint to Madame de Longueville to move on, and she took it.

She moved on to Havre; and there too she was disappointed, in spite of the fact that her friend the Duc de Richelieu held the citadel. Mazarin had written promising to recognise the boy's marriage, if he would shut the gates of Havre in Madame de Longueville's face; and the boy, loving his wife better than he loved the House of Condé, begged to be excused

for not receiving his visitor. So Madame de Longueville proceeded to Dieppe; and there she had a mixed reception. The Governor of the Château received her hospitably, and made her as comfortable as he could; but the citizens were loyal to the King. They went so far as to say, with stubborn obstinacy, that "since the Governor had abandoned the service of the King, he no longer had any right to issue orders to them." And presently royal troops arrived to support the loyalty of the citizens, and to blockade the Dieppe Château on the land side; so that there remained nothing for it but for Madame de Longueville to get away to the Netherlands, and see what she could do for Condé there.

Getting away, however, was neither comfortable nor easy. When Madame de Longueville slipped out of the postern gate of the fortress, she found the Dieppe militia waiting for her on the beach. Though she could not embark, she managed to evade them, and walked a couple of miles along the coast to a small creek, where she lighted upon a couple of fishing-smacks. She hired the skipper of one of them to take her out to her ship in the offing. Bargaining for a big price because the weather was rough, he undertook to try; but with calamitous results. The sailor who was carrying Madame de Longueville out to the boat stumbled and dropped her; the waves rolled her ashore, drenched and very nearly

insensible. The fishermen refused to try again; and it was necessary to hire horses and ride to Poerville, where the curé entertained the party. Remembering how glad she had been of his warm fire, Madame de Longueville never forgot, in happier after-years, to send him an annual gift of firewood from her estate, for the use of his distressed parishioners.

Meanwhile the ship for which she was waiting arrived, and she had another narrow escape, being warned, in the nick of time, that the captain had been bribed to betray her, and that, if she embarked, she would be arrested; so she fled, seeking other hiding-places and a fresh disguise. In the end she got to Havre, in men's clothes—"the humiliating marks," as she calls them, "of her misfortunes"—representing herself as a gentleman in danger of arrest for having killed his antagonist in a duel. And so to Rotterdam, where she resumed "the majestic apparel which so well became her," and, after a hospitable reception by the Prince and Princess of Orange, joined Turenne at Stenai—Turenne, who was now styling himself "Lieutenant-General of the army of the King for the deliverance of the Princes," and had concluded, in the interest of the Princes, an offensive and defensive alliance with Spain. It is significant of the supreme importance of personal aspects in this civil war that the treaty provided for the payment of a substantial annuity to Madame de Longueville herself.

Nor was Turenne the only Richmond, or Mme de Longueville the only lady, in the field. La Rochefoucauld had parted from her, but only to pursue other adventures. Through the death of his father he had become a Duke; and he had made his father's funeral a pretext for assembling his friends and their retainers for a martial enterprise. He and the Duc de Bouillon agreed to act together; and they invited the Princesse de Condé to join them—which she did, with unexpected spirit. She was supposed to be, if not under arrest, at least under observation, at Chantilly; but she escaped, and travelled across country to join her friends near Limoges, where cannon saluted her, and her health was drunk at a banquet of a hundred covers—so repeatedly and so thoroughly that hosts, and guests, and servants are all reported to have been "in a state verging upon intoxication."

Thence she proceeded to Bordeaux, with her little son, the Duc d'Enghien, whom she had taught to play his part. Led by the hand, the child made his appeal to the Parlement in the Palais de Justice: "Pray be a father to me, gentlemen, for Cardinal Mazarin has taken my own father from me." The Parlement hesitated, but the mob insisted. It was voted that "the Princesse de Condé and the Duc d'Enghien, her son, may reside in the town in safety, under the protection of the laws." On the following day, the mob insisted on the

admission of La Rochefoucauld and the Duc de Bouillon; and very soon Guienne was in open revolt against the crown, and Bordeaux had to stand a siege: a siege in which there were many scenes thoroughly typical of this war, in which the aristocracy fought, as it were, in kid gloves, while the people suffered.

We hear of the little Duc d'Enghien conducted to the ramparts, and there calling for a sword in order that he might "kill Mazarin." We hear of the Princesse de Condé herself, accompanied by ladies of rank and fashion, carrying baskets of earth, decorated with bows of ribbon, to the trenches. We hear of Bouillon and La Rochefoucauld conducting themselves as if at a picnic, and "regaling the ladies with fruit and confectionery." We hear, finally, that the Princesse de Condé held nightly receptions on the ramparts, and that there was dancing. One needs those details, as well as the stories of battles, sallies, charges, and skirmishes—as well as the stories of pillage and starvation—if the wars of the Fronde are to be fully and faithfully realised.

The principal disputants were presently to shake hands, make friends, and admit that they had misunderstood each other. "Who would have believed, a week ago," Mazarin asked on that occasion, "that we should be riding in the same coach to-day?" "Tout arrive en France," La Rochefoucauld then made answer. But in the meantime thousands of

persons who had no real concern in the quarrel had perished in helping to bring it to a settlement; and, in the meantime also, Madame de Longueville was devoting herself, with pertinacity and cunning, to the execution of her plans, though there was one step of possible utility which she did not take—she did not make love to Turenne, though that great commander seems to have been most anxious for her to do so.

"M. de Turenne," we read in one of her Lives, "did not confine himself to directing the political enterprises of this princess; he made her the most tender declarations, which, however, she did not receive with all the gratitude that he expected; for it is said that she jested much about them with La Moussaye, Governor of Stenai."

The consequences, however, of her rejection of his addresses were not so disastrous as they might have been. Turenne and Mme de Longueville remained allies; and she was able to accomplish by intrigue what he failed to achieve by force. Mazarin, who had himself been a soldier before he became a priest, beat Turenne badly at the battle of Rethel; but Madame de Longueville "worked" the Paris Parlement in favour of the Princes with the result that Mazarin thought it well to release them. She was clever enough, in short, to bring about an alliance between the Fronde

of the Parlement and the Fronde of the Noble Lords; and Mazarin was so much impressed that he bowed low to Condé, and even, if Mlle de Montpensier may be trusted, "kissed his boot."

He kissed it, however, if at all, hypocritically, and with mental reservations. His object was to split the coalition, and presently he attained it. Before very long, Condé was once more in fear of arrest, once more in flight, and once more in the field; and Madame de Longueville was one of those who urged him to fight instead of making terms. Turenne turned against him, but she stuck to him to the last; this being the period of the Fronde to which belongs Mlle de Montpensier's remarkable ride to Orleans—ground which there is no need for us to cover a second time. Mademoiselle slips out of the story at the time of Condé's evacuation of Paris; but Madame de Longueville continued the resistance at Bordeaux, where the attempt was made to weave intrigues, not only with Spain, but also with England.

The attempt came to nothing: for a season the Frondeurs had shaken the power of absolute monarchy in France; but, in the end, having kicked their last feudal kick, they found themselves beaten to their knees. Treachery accelerated the end—Condé's own brother, Conti, deserted him; but it was recognised that it would be futile even to tempt Madame

de Longueville. "Madame de Longueville," writes Abbé de Cosnax, who had a hand in the treachery, "was so attached to the interests of Monsieur le Prince that she would never have consented to any treaty of peace in which he did not participate": a just tribute, so far as it goes, and thoroughly well deserved. Madame de Longueville was not only as brave as she was clever, but also as loyal as she was brave. One is compelled to admire her, though equally compelled to make certain reservations in doing so.

Loyalty is always admirable; but conceptions of loyalty vary from age to age, and Madame de Longueville's conception of it cannot but strike a modern reader as wrong-headed. She could not rise to the height of Montesquieu's doctrine that the claims of one's province should be preferred to the claims of one's commune, and the claims of one's country to those of one's province. Family quarrels, it seemed to her, were the things which really mattered: it was natural, and right, and proper to fight for her brother against her King, to the injury of the interests of France,—and that even to the point of entering into treacherous relations with foreign Powers. But there was nothing characteristically feminine in that view of the matter. It was the common doctrine of the aristocrats of the *ancien régime*, largely acquiesced in by the common people, and not finally shattered until the storm of Rousseau's eloquence

broke against it. No feelings appear to have been outraged because, when the war ended, the principal rebels were treated leniently, whereas a common man—a retired butcher—was broken on the wheel.

Yet Madame de Longueville did ultimately come to realise that she had made mischief, and that the consequences of that mischief had involved innumerable innocent sufferers: that her brother's soldiers, and Mazarin's soldiers also, had comported themselves as highway robbers; that the mortality in battle had been largely exceeded by the mortality due to disease and destitution; that the pleasant land of France had become a wilderness, depopulated, but with an undue proportion of widows and orphans, with three thousand paupers clamouring for relief in the town of Laon alone. Realising these things, she became religious, and spent a great deal of her time on her knees in nunneries, and was particularly attracted by the austere ways of the Jansenists. A remarkable tribute is paid to her by one of the historians of Port-Royal:

"Thou hast without doubt written the reward of this princess in heaven, where I shall presently behold it, and Thou waitest for Thy great day to overwhelm her with the glory which she has justly merited for her good works. . . . She suffered in patience the insults of the proud. She knew the scornful things which

were said of her, and people did not blush to call her the shame and the ignominy of the royal family. Thou wilt cause them to see that she was its ornament; and Saint Louis, without doubt, will not blush for her in heaven."

Which seems to show that, in the view of some devout witnesses, the roads which lead to heaven are as many and as tortuous as those which lead to Rome.

CHAPTER XVIII

The insurrection in La Vendée—Various women warriors—Mme de Larochejaquelein—Success and failure—The crossing of the Loire.

THE eighteenth-century aspects of our subject have already been glanced at; and we may now pass straight on to the Revolution. We find, when we come to it, that the line between military and political activity is not very sharply drawn,—except in the case of such definite soldiers as the demoiselles de Fernig and Mme Sans-Gêne; and there is nothing for it but to pick and choose capriciously. There shall be nothing, therefore, about the storming of the Bastille, though women bore pikes in the assault; nothing about Théroigne de Méricourt, though she led the women who marched to Versailles and carried the King and Queen and Dauphin back in triumph to Paris; nothing about Mme Roland or Charlotte Corday, though their careers could be linked with insurrectionary movements in Normandy. But there shall be a chapter about Mme de Larochejaquelein and her adventures in the war of La Vendée.

She was not a heroine of the stamp of Jeanne

d'Arc. She did not play at soldiers like Mlle de Montpensier, or pull the strings of intrigue like Mme de Longueville. But she saw much hard fighting and cruel suffering, and she was a part of what she saw and has chronicled her experiences fully and faithfully. One can sympathise and admire, even though one feels her to have been wrong-headed. At the most, she was only one wrong-headed person among many; for "wrong-headed" is an epithet applicable to the whole Vendée business.

A great deal of wrong-headed admiration has been wasted on the Vendean peasants because they were loyal and religious; because they served God, honoured and obeyed the King, and behaved respectfully to their landlords. Their only virtue was in fact their courage, which is not to be denied. For the rest, they were priest-ridden boors, whose brains were impenetrable fog-banks; devoid of any sense of the solidarity of the interests of France, stubbornly resolved to set their own interests above those of their country, submissive only to the local authority of the territorial magnates. They remind one, in short, of the peasants whom the poet represents as singing:

> God bless the squire and his relations,
> And keep us in our proper stations.

It is a significant fact that they began their revolt on the very day on which the Republic abolished, without compensation, those feudal

privileges which had been among the worst evils of the *ancien régime*.

But that, of course, was not their grievance. Though the feudal lords of their neighbourhood had been lenient in the exercise of their privileges, the abolition of the *corvée* would hardly by itself have exasperated their dependents to the point of civil war. The thing which they really, fundamentally, and unwaveringly objected to was compulsory military service at a distance from their homes. They had objected to it while Louis XVI was on the throne, just as keenly as they objected to it after his deposition, and their passive resistance had generally enabled them to evade it. The Republic, however, would not stand the nonsense which the King had stood. The country being in danger, it decreed the *levée en masse*, and proceeded to enforce it. That, rather than the persecution of the King and the priests, was the governmental act which stirred the hornets' nest. The proof is in one of their own proclamations :

" No militia ! Let us live in peace in our own part of the country ! You say that the enemy is coming, and threatens our homesteads ! Very well ! We are quite able to defend our homesteads against him if he comes ! "

Which meant, of course, as Michelet points out in a cunning paraphrase :

"Let the enemy come! Let the Austrian armies, with their Pandours and Croats, ravage France as much as they please! What does France matter to Vendée? Lorraine and Champagne may be overrun with fire and sword; but Lorraine and Champagne are not Vendée. Paris may perish; the eye of the world may be put out; but what does that matter to Vendée? Never mind about France! Never mind about the world! Time enough for us to look to our safety when we see the enemy's horsemen from behind our hedges!"

Not a very elevated sentiment, truly; but a very convenient sentiment for those who laid themselves out to exploit it in the interests of the royal family of France, even at the risk of rending France asunder while her hereditary enemies thundered at the gate. And they exploited it, of course, without any qualms of conscience, having been brought up to believe that Kings ruled by divine right, and that the privileges of landlords had the same sacred origin, and having always been too much occupied with gaiety and field sports to examine those propositions, even when they heard that wicked philosophers, like Jean Jacques Rousseau, were questioning them. That point in their mentality made clear, we may proceed to study their performances, and the part which Mme de Larochejaquelein played in them.

One calls her Mme de Larochejaquelein because that was her name when she published her Memoirs; but Louis de Larochejaquelein was her second husband, and she did not marry him till after the war was over: at the time of the revolt she was Mme de Lescure. Her father was gentleman-in-waiting to the Comte de Provence (afterwards Louis XVIII); her mother lady-in-waiting to the King's sister Mme Victoire. She had the King for her godfather, and was born at Versailles, and lived in the Palace there until that 6th of October, when the mob took the royal family to Paris. One of her aunts followed the Princesses when they fled to Rome.

Married at the age of nineteen to the Marquis de Lescure, who was twenty-five, she left Poitou for Paris in February 1792. Her husband meant to emigrate and join the army of Condé; but Marie Antoinette pressed him to remain. Consequently the family was still in Paris on that 10th of August when the mob stormed the Tuileries and massacred the Swiss Guard. Their lives were in peril: they had to disguise themselves and hide, and only succeeded in obtaining passports for their return to Poitou by the help of a commissary of police, who had once been M. de Lescure's tutor, and who now drove with them in his uniform, shouting "Vive la nation!" at intervals, prepared to sacrifice everybody and everything to their safety—as he proved when the

party met a company of the Marseillais on the road :

" The postilion took it into his head to drive through the very middle of them, throwing down two or three. In an instant we saw guns levelled at us. M. Thomassin showed himself at the coach-door. ' My comrades,' said he to them, ' kill that rascal. *Vive la nation !* ' "

Thus they progressed to their estate, the Château de Clisson ; and M. de Lescure's cousin, Henri de Larochejacquelein—the brother of the Louis de Larochejaquelein whom Mme de Lescure was ultimately to marry—joined the party. It is to be noted that Mme de Lescure, at that stage, could not even ride, and was timorous : when the excitement began and the gendarmes came to the château to requisition horses, she " wept," she says, " from fear." But she was to find her courage when she needed it ; and she was to need it very soon. All aristocrats were " suspect " ; and the hour was coming for all suspects to be arrested. The gendarmes were very polite about it, but quite firm. Mme de Lescure and her mother were taken to Bressuire, and locked up in the house of a grocer, with a pressing caution not to excite popular animosity by showing themselves at the windows.

That was her position when the rising began, and " a reinforcement of four hundred Mar-

seillais arrived and insisted upon putting the prisoners to death." She heard them, from her hiding-place, singing their patriotic songs: eleven peasants were marched beneath her window to the place of execution, where they were cut down with sabres while they knelt in prayer; it was fortunate for her that these self-appointed executioners did not know her whereabouts. Even when the royalist attack was compelling the republicans to retire in disorder, she did not feel safe:

"During this retreat we expected our fate, not supposing that we should be overlooked entirely. Our window shutters were closed, and every time we heard a company halt before our door we imagined that they had come to seize us. At last, by degrees, they evacuated the town, without having remembered us, and we were free."

And then they went back to Clisson, where Mme de Lescure began to make white cockades, while the gentlemen fomented the conspiracy, and performed military exercises in the court-yard: one may suppose that Mme de Lescure, at the same time, took the opportunity of learning to ride. A few days later, La Vendée was in a blaze; and Mme de Larochejaquelein was acting as her husband's aide-de-camp and secretary. She "galloped off," when necessary; she "had the tocsin sounded"; she "delivered

requisitions"; she "sent expresses to the neighbouring villages"; she "harangued the peasants to the best of my ability"; etc., etc. Her power to write a very small and legible hand was particularly useful: she was employed to copy out an appeal for help which was to be sent to England, concealed in the wadding of the emissary's pistols.

The war was a guerilla war, without any concerted plan of operations; the peasant partisans were continually disbanding and reassembling, claiming the right to revisit their homes in the intervals between the battles; no general staff combined and no intelligence department recorded their movements. Consequently it would be idle to attempt any systematic account of the vicissitudes of the struggle, though such accounts have, in fact, been pieced together by military experts. A few anecdotes—a few pictures—are all that there is space for; and we must first single out the stories which Mme de Larochejaquelein tells us of the women who actually bore arms against the Blues.

According to the Blues there were quite a number of them; according to Mme de Larochejaquelein that allegation was their false excuse for the atrocities which they perpetrated. "I do not believe," she writes, "there were in all ten women bearing arms disguised as men"; but about some of the ten she gives us particulars:

"I saw two sisters, fourteen and fifteen

years old, who were very courageous. In the army of M. de Bonchamp, a young woman became a dragoon to avenge the death of her father, and performed prodigies of valour during the whole war, under the name of *L'Angevine*. . . . I one day saw a young woman, tall and beautiful, with pistols and a sabre hung at her girdle, come to Chollet, accompanied by two other women, armed with pikes. She brought a spy to my father, who interrogated her. She told him she was from the parish of Tout-le-Monde, and that the women kept guard there when the men were absent in the army."

And then there is the story of the woman whom the Republicans found dead after the battle of Thouars, and supposed to have "passed among the Vendéens for an inspired Maid, like Jeanne d'Arc." She had never, according to Mme de Larochejaquelein, passed for anything of the kind; nothing of the kind having ever been encouraged by the Vendean leaders:

"The generals had not only strictly prohibited any women from following the army, but declared that any found there should be ejected with ignominy; and during the short periods in which the troops were assembled, even female sutlers were not allowed to attend."

But Mme de Larochejaquelein had known the Maid in question, and had even corresponded about her with the vicar of her parish, who

replied that "she was a very good girl, but that he had been unable to dissuade her from becoming a soldier, and that she had taken the sacrament immediately before leaving home." So she became a soldier—with what result Mme de Larochejaquelein tells us:

"The evening before the battle she sought for M. de Lescure, and, addressing him, said, 'General, I am a woman! Mme de Lescure knows it, and also that my character is good. To-morrow there is to be a battle; let me have a pair of shoes; I am sure that I shall fight so that you will not send me away.' She fought, indeed, under the eye of M. de Lescure, and called to him, 'General, you must not pass me; I shall always be nearer the Blues than you.' She was wounded in the hand, but this only animated her the more, and, showing the wound to him, she said, 'This is nothing.' Rushing furiously into the thickest part of the engagement, she perished."

There must have been, altogether, about 100,000 royalists in arms in La Vendée; and, as the country was denuded of regular troops, they began by carrying everything before them. Properly led and obedient to discipline, they might very well have overrun France; but they had no desire to venture far from home, and presently certain prisoners of war—released by the enemy on the understanding that they would not serve against the Coalition

for a year—were available to be turned against them. Their most ambitious enterprise was the attempt to take Nantes; but, though Angers and Saumur had fallen to them, Nantes was not to fall. General Canclaux was a match for them: they got into the suburbs, but they did not get into the town; and, though they were not pursued when they retired, the repulse was the turning-point of their fortunes. Cathelineau had been killed; Biron and Westermann were after them.

They were by no means done for, but were still to win several bloody battles, being always, to the last, very formidable when on the defensive. Both Biron and Westermann were to be recalled to Paris, and guillotined, like so many other unsuccessful generals. It was a case, however, of winning battles, but losing the campaign—and not all the battles were won. In particular the Vendeans lost the battle of Tremblaye, where M. de Lescure was dangerously wounded, and the battle of Chollet. The net result of the battles was that they were rounded up on the banks of the Loire, and decided to cross it, and see whether fortune would favour them better on the northern bank of the river. It is the point at which Mme de Larochejaquelein's narrative once more becomes personal.

War, it would seem, had not been her sole occupation during the period of revolt. "I was three months gone with child," she said;

"my situation was shocking." This is her description of the scene:

"The heights of Saint-Florent form a kind of semi-circular boundary to a vast level strand reaching to the Loire, which is very wide at this place. Eighty thousand people were crowded together in this valley; soldiers, women, children, the aged, and the wounded, flying from immediate destruction. Behind them they perceived the smoke rising from the villages the republicans were burning. Nothing was heard but loud sobs, groans, and cries. . . . Twenty bad boats carried successively the fugitives who crowded in them; others tried to cross on horses; all spread out their arms towards the other side, supplicating to be taken there. . . . Many of us compared this disorder, this despair, this terrible uncertainty of the future, this immense spectacle, this bewildering crowd, this valley, this stream which must be crossed, to our idea of the last judgment."

To add to the horror, there was a dispute whether the Republican prisoners—some 5,000 in number—should or should not be massacred before the crossing. M. de Lescure, lying helpless on a mattress, pleaded for their lives; and they were spared. Mme de Lescure had to arrange for the crossing, not only of her wounded husband, but also of her little child; the latter being wrapped in his bed-

clothes and put in an arm-chair covered with a kind of mattress. "We descended," she writes, "from Saint-Florent to the shore, in the middle of the crowd. Many officers accompanied us. They drew their sabres, made a circle round us, and we arrived at the edge of the water." Thus they were rowed over to a half-burnt hamlet, where Mme de Lescure sent for some milk for her child, while her father went to look for her mother :

"Varades is a quarter of a league distant, on the side of a hill. M. de Lescure was impatient to arrive there. The weather was clear, but the wind was cold. They placed two pikes under the arm-chair, and the soldiers carried it. My *femme-de-chambre* and myself supported his feet, wrapped up in napkins."

At Varades there was an alarm of an attack :

"I had never found myself so near a battle, and what a moment to be attacked! I stopped, quite terrified. The firing reanimated M. de Lescure, who was almost insensible. He asked what it was. I entreated him to let himself be carried to a neighbouring wood. He answered that the Blues would do him a service by despatching him, and that the balls would hurt him less than the cold and wind. I did not listen to him ; he was carried into the wood ; my child was brought after me, and many other people took refuge in it."

The noise of the firing, however, rolled away ; and presently the march could be begun. A peasant of the neighbourhood proposed to hide M. de Lescure and the child ; but the proposal was not accepted :

" I was tempted to take advantage of this offer for my child ; but the fear that it would be carried to the foundling hospital, or that they would not take enough care of it, and the hope that she would continue in good health, determined me to keep her. I could not make up my mind to part with so dear a thing ; and we all wished, at that time, to run common dangers, and share a common fate."

So they set out, M. de Lescure crying aloud from the pain caused by the jolting of the cart in which he had been placed. Another means of conveying him had to be found ; and we will conclude this chapter with another of Mme de Larochejaquelein's graphic pictures of the procession of the fugitives :

" We had a kind of litter made from an old arm-chair ; we put hoops over it, and hung sheets, to keep the air from the poor sufferer. I determined to walk near the litter with my maid Agatha and some of my people. My mother, my aunt, and my child were gone before. Families and friends walked together, and tried to keep united. Each had protectors among the officers and soldiers. . . . M. de

Lescure uttered such cries as harrowed my very soul. I was overcome with fatigue and distress. My boots wounded my feet. We travelled between two files of cavalry, and a fairly large body of infantry marched behind us. . . . The rear-guard . . . was specially charged with guarding M. de Lescure."

And then, when there was a false report that the hussars were charging the fugitives :

" Reason failed me ; my first idea was to fly. But then I recollected that I was with M. de Lescure. Doubting my own courage, and fearing that the approach of the hussars would strike me with an involuntary and invincible terror, I entered quickly into the carriage, without telling the reason, to make it impossible for me not to perish with my husband."

And so along the road to the coast.

CHAPTER XIX

The check at Granville—The check at Angers—Dispersal of the royalist army—Mme de Larochejaquelein in hiding—Thermidor and the subsequent amnesty.

THE royalists, though in retreat, did not regard themselves as beaten : they had plenty of fight in them still, and soon formed an aggressive plan of campaign. They would raise Brittany, raise Normandy; they would seize a port on the Channel, and receive reinforcements from England. The port of Granville was chosen as their objective.

Seeing that they were marching, encumbered by their wounded, their women, and their children, in a column several miles long, a competent general would have had no great difficulty in cutting the straggling column in half, and throwing it into disorder. General Léchelle, who opposed them, however, was equally timorous and incapable. He attacked the head of the column with only a portion of his forces, and was badly beaten, afterwards committing suicide—presumably in order to avoid the guillotine. The royalists won three battles in two days, and other battles at longer intervals, and swept on in triumph, believing that all was well.

But just as Nantes had held them up before, so Granville held them up now. The expected English help was not forthcoming: on the contrary, French men-of-war came out from Saint-Malo and cannonaded them. They spent thirty-six hours in front of Granville, losing about 200 men; and then the rank and file exclaimed that they had had enough, and clamoured to be taken back to their own country. So the retreat began, with the winter setting in. They could still win battles, though the campaign was lost; but they did not win all the battles. At last they sustained crushing defeats at Le Mans and Sacenay; and the war, after those disasters, was little more than brigandage, difficult to suppress, but not in a military sense formidable. Carrier was at Nantes, guillotining and drowning the refugees.

That outline sketched, we will turn to Mme de Larochejaquelein for the details in so far as they concerned her.

Her husband, too enfeebled by his wound to retain the command, passed it on to his cousin, Henri de Larochejaquelein, a mere lad of one-and-twenty. He got a little better during the halt at Laval, but he soon relapsed, and died. His wife wished to have his body embalmed and placed in the carriage with her; but that could not be done. "They represented to me," she says, "the dangers to which I exposed the child which I bore in my womb." She had reason, in fact, to fear a miscarriage:

she was told that she would inevitably miscarry if she were not instantly bled. A surgeon cupped her, and she struggled on, getting as far as Granville, and then turning back with the rest. She tells us how her personal influence saved a republican deserter, whom the royalists regarded as a republican spy, from being shot :

"As he finished his story Agatha came in, exclaiming, 'Madam, here are the Germans coming to take him to execution!' He threw himself again at my feet : I resolved to save him. I went up to my father's, where the council was held ; when I was there, in the midst of the generals, they asked me what I wanted. I did not dare to explain myself, and only answered, 'I came for a glass of water.' I went down again, and with a tone of authority, said to the Germans, 'You may go ; the council puts the prisoner under the guard of the Chevalier de Beauvolliers.' They retired. I sent for M. Allard, and I begged him to arrange this affair."

Splendide mendax : that action was worth more than the embroidering of banners and the making of white cockades for the royal cause. Presently there was a rout, the first of several routs ; and even those who ran were indignant with others for running too :

"I was among the horsemen, quite be-

wildered, without knowing anybody or to whom to have recourse. A horseman held his sabre over me, saying, 'Cowardly woman, you shall not pass.' 'Sir, I am with child, and dying; have pity on me.' 'Poor wretch, I pity you,' he answered, and he let me pass. The soldiers, while flying themselves, reproached the women very unjustly for doing the same, and for having caused the rout by their fears."

Yet, if we may believe Mme de Larochejaquelein, it was largely by the women that the rout was stopped. A boy nearly killed his own mother for running away; but, on the other hand:

"Madame de Bonchamp, who was in the town, rallied the men of her husband's army. I also wanted to oppose myself to the rout; but I was so weak and ill that I could hardly stand. I saw at a distance some of my acquaintances, but did not venture to move to join them, for fear of adding to the confusion and appearing to be running away. A number of women showed prodigious resolution and decision of character. They stopped the runaways, struck them, and opposed their passing. I saw the *femme-de-chambre* of Mme de la Chevalerie take a musket and put her horse to a gallop, crying out: 'Forward, women of Poitou!'"

That was at Dol. The tide of battle was

turned, and "the women were thanked for the share they had had in this success." The army resumed its march, and tried to take Angers, as unsuccessfully as it had tried to take Granville. It was at the attack upon Angers that Mme de Larochejaquelein ventured under fire, and was fetched back by a horseman whom her father sent after her. "I experienced," she candidly admits, "a secret feeling of satisfaction in thus seeing myself out of the danger which I had gone to seek." At Angers, too, Mme de Larochejaquelein's aunt disappeared; and the search for her was vain: "We never knew the particulars of her strange and melancholy disappearance; but we heard of her being taken prisoner and perishing on the scaffold, two days afterwards."

Then began the march through La Flèche to Le Mans; and, on the way, another of the terrors which war has for women who are also mothers was experienced:

"While I was at La Flèche, I looked out for an asylum for my poor little girl. Nobody could undertake the charge of her, notwithstanding the rewards I offered; she was too young to be concealed and kept from crying."

At Le Mans, too, no refuge could be found for the child; and the royalists had hardly entered Le Mans when the republicans attacked them there, and drove them out, after a battle in which there were 15,000 casualties. Mme

de Larochejaquelein was swept away in the rout:

"I saw a young man on horseback pass near me, with a gentle countenance. I took his hand. 'Sir,' said I to him, 'have pity on a poor woman, sick, and with child. I cannot go on.' The young man began to cry, and answered, 'I am a woman also; we shall perish together, for I cannot make my way in the street any more than you can.' We both stayed and waited."

Separated from her mother and her child, she picked them up again at Laval. The next halting-place was Craon, where she learnt that her aunt—a woman of eighty—had been taken at Angers, and shot. It was a race now for the Loire; and it was doubtful whether those who reached it would be able to cross. A few succeeded, at Ancenis; but Mme de Larochejaquelein was one of the many who did not. She found, at Ancenis, a peasant woman who was willing, for money, to take charge of her little girl: she herself went on to Nort, where the demoralised royalist officers opened the military chest and divided its contents. From Nort, she continued with the diminishing remnant to Blin, and from Blin to Savenay. Her description of the dress of the fugitives, who had by this time worn out all the clothes with which they began the campaign, is very graphic:

"Besides my peasant dress, I had on my

head a purple flannel hood, and an old blanket wrapped about me, and a large piece of blue cloth tied round my neck with twine. I wore three pairs of yellow worsted stockings, and green slippers, fastened to my feet with cord. My horse had a hussar's saddle with a sheepskin. M. Roger Mouliniers had a turban, and a Turkish dress which he had taken from the theatre at La Flèche. The Chevalier de Beauvolliers was wrapped up in a lawyer's gown, and had a woman's hat over a flannel night-cap. Mme d'Armaeille and her children were covered with pieces of yellow damask. M. de Verteuil, who was killed in battle, had two petticoats on, one fastened round his neck, and the other round his waist."

It was as if they had dressed for a comic opera and then been called upon to play a tragedy; and the last act of the tragedy was near. At Savenay, Mme de Larochejaquelein was roused from her sleep, and warned by her friend, the royalist leader, M. de Marigny:

"It is all over," he whispered. "We are lost. To-morrow's attack cannot be resisted. In twelve hours the army will be exterminated. I hope to die. Try to escape. Save yourself during the darkness. Farewell! Farewell!"

She set out at midnight with her mother and a Mlle Mamet. Their guide was drunk: they fell into many ditches, but they found a refuge

for the night at the Château de l'Ecuraye. Thence they were conducted to a farm-house in a wood, getting out by a back door while the republican hussars were entering the courtyard of the château, and sent out to tend sheep, as the least suspicious occupation available for them. And even that place of refuge was not final—no place of refuge could be. The Blues were everywhere on the prowl, and it fared ill with any royalists whom they caught. It was not safe to stay long in any one hiding-place: it was often necessary, when the Blues were known to be coming, to hide in a wood, or even in a ditch.

That was the manner of Mme de Larochejaquelein's life, all through the winter, all through the spring, all through the summer: sometimes in comfortable, more often in uncomfortable, asylums. In these distressing conditions, she gave birth to twins; they were secretly baptized, and their baptismal certificates were scratched on pewter plates with a nail, and buried. In the end, when the severity of the search was relaxed, and an amnesty was offered—though it was doubtful whom that amnesty would include and whom it would exempt—she got into Nantes, "dressed as a peasant, with a wallet on my shoulders, and some fowls in my hand." It was not till she got there that she learnt the fate of her friends.

Some of them had been taken in battle; some

had been captured and shot; others had been guillotined or drowned in the Loire; a few—but they were very few—had escaped. In the last class was included her friend, Mme de Bonchamp who, at the time of the dispersal of the royalists at Ancenis, had sickened for the smallpox while hiding in the trunk of a hollow tree:

"At the end of three months she was discovered, conveyed to Nantes, and condemned to death. She had resigned herself to her fate, when she read on a slip of paper, handed to her through the grate of her dungeon, these words: 'Say you are with child.' She made this declaration, and her execution was suspended. Her husband having been dead a long time, she was obliged to say the child belonged to a republican soldier."

The lie was eventually exposed; but it tided her over the time of peril, and she obtained her reprieve. Few others were as fortunate, though Mme de Larochejaquelein's maid Agatha escaped by finding favour in the eyes of the republican General Lamberty. Her indignant resistance of his advances, even when the acceptance of them seemed to be the price of her salvation, so impressed him that he removed her from the boat on which she had been placed, to be drowned, and found her a hiding-place. And then came Thermidor, and Mme de Larochejaquelein's opportunity to obtain a passport and get away. She mentions with pride the

fact that republican officers, who were addressing each other as "thee" and "thou," spoke to her deferentially in the third person, the style which domestic servants and small tradespeople adopt in conversation with their employers and social superiors. She adds:

"The Vendean ladies, and I in particular, had such a warlike reputation that they fancied Mme de Lescure must be a great, masculine woman, wielding her sabre, and fearing nothing. I was obliged to disclaim all the high feats attributed to me, and frankly tell how the least danger frightened me."

Thus she got to Bordeaux, and thence to Spain, subsequently returning to France to engage in further intrigues which there is no need to review. Decidedly she was not a great woman, though her experiences were painful and interesting. No one can deny that her ideas were firmly fixed; but no one can contend that her ideals were high. She fought (or, at least, embroidered banners and stitched cockades) for a faction at the very time when the conception of the fatherland as something greater and worthier than any faction was obtaining a new grip on the minds of her countrymen; and she flattered herself that her sedition was noble and religious.

So we leave her; but about La Vendée, and the women of La Vendée, there is still something more to be said.

CHAPTER XX

The Duchesse de Berry—Her attempt to raise La Vendée for the Comte de Chambord—Failure of her friends to dissuade her—The rising—Defeat—Mme de Berry seeks a hiding-place at Nantes.

OUR next Vendean name is that of Marie-Caroline, Duchesse de Berry. In her story, too, the romance of war was supplemented by romance of a tenderer kind; and we shall not find the war so bloody that it need distract our attention from the lighter and brighter aspects of that romance. Mme de Berry was of the generation of the Romantics: the contemporary of George Sand, Alfred de Musset, Victor Hugo, Sainte-Beuve, Alfred de Vigny, and other interesting men and women of letters who, in order that they might write romantic books, laid themselves out to live romantic lives. She shared their temperament, if not their talents; and she may be said to have represented the Romantic Movement in royal circles, and in the sphere of civil strife. She was not bloodthirsty, like the Vendeans of the revolutionary epoch; and her enemies were not ferocious, like the republicans of that date: *romanesque* is the epithet to

which she is best entitled. Her attempted revolution can be best described as an escapade: a revolution which was to have been made in rose-water, and was delicately dealt with by antagonists who wore kid gloves.

Born in 1798, Mme de Berry was the daughter of Bomba, King of Naples, and the sister of Queen Cristina, consort of Ferdinand VII of Spain. She and her sister had many traits in common: an equal energy; an equal passion for political intrigue, based on the unreasoned assumption that it was really worth men's while to fight, and suffer, and die for the dynastic causes which they represented; an equal susceptibility, in the third place, to the passion of love inspired by men of inferior station; an equal readiness, in conclusion, to settle down, after the period of *sturm und drang* had passed, to the domestic duties of the mothers of large families. Just as Cristina, after Ferdinand had died, lost no time in proposing marriage to Private Muñoz of the Guards, whom she promoted to the rank of Grandee of Spain, so the Duchesse de Berry—but we shall see.

The Duc de Berry, it will be remembered, was the heir of Charles X, and was assassinated, the inheritance thus passing to his infant son, the Comte de Chambord. In 1830, however, came that "July Revolution" which drove Charles X into exile. He fled to England, and the Duchesse de Berry fled with him, and made her headquarters at his home, first at Lulworth,

in Dorsetshire, and afterwards at Holyrood Palace, in Edinburgh. It was a dull life for her, for Charles X was a dull man to live with, a man who divided his time between long prayers and long games of whist. He was not welcomed and feasted at Holyrood, but simply allowed to live there, seeking sanctuary there from his creditors—army contractors who desired, but were unable, to obtain, some payment, on account of expenses incurred by them, long before, in equipping the army of Condé.

At first Mme de Berry was able to relieve her tedium by exploring England and visiting the country seats of the aristocracy. She was present at the opening of the railway between Manchester and Liverpool; she stayed with the Duke of Devonshire at Chatsworth, and with Lord Scarsdale at Kedlestone. We hear of her at Malvern, Birmingham, Cheltenham, Gloucester, Clifton, Bristol, and Bath. "She made," writes Mme de Boigne in the last instalment ot her Memoirs, "quite a long stay at Bath. The news reached Paris that, at Bath, she had given birth to a daughter. The sequel renders all stories of that kind quite probable; but, at the moment, I believed the rumour to be the calumnious invention of her enemies, and was most indignant at it."

The "sequel," however, was not to be immediate, and will have no place in these pages. Here we have only to note that Mme de Berry was bored, and, being bored, decided to go to

Italy, "where," according to Mme de Boigne, "nobody in the least wanted to see her." Whether her plans for the enterprise which was to relieve her boredom were formed before she left England or afterwards, it is difficult to say,—it was not, at all events, until after her arrival in Italy that they matured and took shape. She then decided to hire a boat, land on the French coast, issue a manifesto, and appeal to her friends to help her. So, having provided herself with £6,000 for preliminary expenses, she set out on the *Carlo Alberto*, and succeeded in disembarking on a beach near Marseilles.

The opinion of her friends was sharply divided as to the wisdom of her proceedings. Hotheads like Charette, the Vendean guerilla chieftain, were urging her on; more cautious supporters, like Chateaubriand, and the eloquent royalist advocate, Berryer, were trying to hold her back. Charette, in fact, wrote to her to say that he had armed and organised La Vendée, and concluded with the appeal: "Every day that you remain absent from the country is a day stolen from your son's inheritance." Chateaubriand, on the other hand, refused the post which she offered him in the Provisional Government which she proposed to nominate. "Minister Plenipotentiary by night," he wrote, "*chargé d'affaires* receiving his credentials in the dark—those are commissions for which I am not sensible of any aptitude. Concealed

devotion makes no appeal to me. I must show my loyalty openly or not at all."

That was his polite way of expressing himself: in conversation with Mme de Boigne, he expressed himself less politely, speaking of Mme de Berry as "that Italian dancer on the tight-rope." And Mme de Berry, in the meantime, was beginning to fail, without even having enjoyed a first encouraging glimmer of success. The revolution was to have begun at Marseilles; but it was found impossible even to bring about a riot there. The signal was to have been given by the ringing of the tocsin at the Church of Saint-Martin; but the sexton who had the key of the belfry could not be found when he was wanted. The rioters dispersed quietly, supposing that they had mistaken the day for the revolution. The few of them who still hung about were arrested, and the Duchesse de Berry, who was hiding in the vicinity, received the laconic note: "The movement has failed; you had better get out of the country at once."

The sea was so rough that she could not do so; and the custom-house officers were searching the coast for her. Moreover, she remembered a dream which she had had before her departure—a dream in which her dead husband had appeared to her, and spoken these significant words: "I quite approve of your plans; but you will not succeed in the south—only in La Vendée." That was a plain intimation that

she had better get to La Vendée as best she could; so she smashed open the door of a fisherman's hut, and spent the night in it. The next day she threw herself on the hospitality of a republican, who was too chivalrous to betray her, and got thence to the château of M. de Bonrecueil. A post-chaise was there found for her, and she drove across France, like any ordinary traveller, unsuspected by the gendarmes—representing that one of her retainers was her husband and another her footman. A hiding-place was found for her: she dressed herself as a peasant girl, and assumed the name of Petit Pierre.

Once more her serious friends urged her not to be so foolish. Berryer, in particular, undertook a romantic journey in order to obtain a secret interview with her. Guided mysteriously to her hiding-place by a little child, he not only admonished her himself, but handed her a letter of admonition from Chateaubriand. "The true friends of Your Royal Highness," Chateaubriand wrote, "consider that, if Your Royal Highness is now in the West or the South (where they cannot believe her to be) it would be well for her to withdraw as promptly as possible, after first exerting all her authority for the pacification of the departments, and leave France the pleasing recollection of her courage, her beneficence, and her virtue." Some of the local leaders spoke in the same sense, pointing out that their organisation was

incomplete, their supply of munitions inadequate, and the failure of their projected enterprise as nearly certain as anything in this world can be.

But Mme de Berry was not to be put off like that. She had been promised a revolution, and she meant to have one, or to know the reason why : she spoke to that effect, thumping the table vigorously. The most effective argument which Berryer could use was that the Government did not take her seriously, and was not likely to do so ; that there was no chance whatever of her perishing gloriously either in action or on the scaffold ; that she would certainly be taken prisoner, and might be locked up for a very long time—perhaps for the remainder of her life. That prospect frightened her, and she promised to drop her schemes ; but she had hardly given her promise before she exercised the privilege of her sex, and changed her mind, owing to the receipt of false news contained in a lying letter, which doubtless emanated from one of the hotheads of the party.

" What's this ? " she exclaimed, when she had read it. " The heather on fire in the south ! Then I shall not leave France ! No, no ! " And she hastily scrawled and despatched to Charette a note concluding with these oracular words : " Don't hand in your resignation, my friend ! Petit Pierre has no intention of handing in hers." And Charette obeyed her loyally, and she had her civil war, though it was a

badly bungled business; so badly bungled, and so quickly over, that it is not worth while to attempt any detailed relation of the fighting. Wherever the partisans presented themselves they were easily scattered; and the only feat of arms of any consequence was the defence of the Château de Penissière by 45 Vendeans against about 900 regulars. The château being burnt over their heads, they charged and cut their way out, cheering for Henri V—Mme de Berry having made her escape just before the attack began.

That was all, except for brigandage and reprisals. Mme de Berry's war was over almost as soon as it had begun; and she now found herself abandoned in an out-of-the-way farm-house, a leader without followers, and with no companion except the daughter of one of her supporters, Mlle Eulalie de Kersabiec, who had gone through the campaign with her—such a poor campaign as it had been—under the name of Petit Paul. She and her friend conferred together, and decided that they would go to Nantes, and that Madame de Berry should hide there, and wait upon events.

It is not a very exciting story, so far; but it has a sequel. In fact, it has two sequels, each of them exciting in its way.

CHAPTER XXI

Mme de Berry in hiding—Her betrayal by the Jew Deutz—Her discovery in a secret chamber by the gendarmes—Her arrest and removal to prison—How Deutz received the reward of his treachery.

It was in the disguise of peasant women coming to market that the Duchesse de Berry and her friend passed the gates of Nantes; and, as it was the custom of peasant women in those days to go about with bare feet, Madame soiled her feet in the filth of a farm-yard dunghill in order that their whiteness might not arouse suspicion. And so she disappeared from view; and for five months all France—and indeed all Europe, with the exception of a few personal friends—wondered what had become of her. Some thought that she was dead; others that she was still dodging the gendarmerie in Vendean farm-houses; others, again, that she had escaped from the country and was travelling under an assumed name. The truth was that she was living at Nantes, in a garret at the top of the house belonging to the loyal Mlles de Guiny, prepared, whenever the alarm might be raised, to seek the greater seclusion of a secret chamber behind the fire-place.

"You had better hang Walter Scott. It is he who is really to blame for the escapade," was the verdict of a sage cynic on the proceedings; and, in truth, they were just such proceedings as the exciting romances of a popular novelist might have suggested. Yet there was, at the same time, a certain method in the madness. It was not merely that Madame thought it incumbent on her to share the risks of the insurrectionists whom Louis Philippe's soldiers were busily hunting down; it was also not unreasonable for her to hope, like Mr. Micawber, that, if she waited long enough, "something" would, in point of fact, "turn up."

Neither Louis Philippe nor his ministers enjoyed great personal popularity; and there was a likelihood of complications resulting from their foreign policy. The question of Belgian independence, in particular—for Belgium had lately cut itself away from the United Netherlands—seemed likely to embroil France with the northern Powers. Should it do so, France might be invaded: should there be such an invasion, and should Madame then show herself at the head of a Vendean host, there was no saying what might not happen. Those were the reflections of which she chewed the cud in her garret, during those five months, corresponding, the while, secretly and, as a rule, in cipher, with her supporters, and even with the King of Holland, to whom she looked for help.

Meanwhile the Orleanist Government continued its search, and the nets closed.

Not that the Orleanists had any particular desire to capture her, or any intention of treating her with severity, if they caught her. She was the Queen's niece ; and, if the royal family thirsted for the blood of her adherents, it certainly did not thirst for hers. If only she would have taken to flight, honour would have been declared to be satisfied ; and she would have been laughed at, and pardoned. Still, as she would not take to flight, and as her continued presence in the country entailed possibilities of further mischief, there was nothing for it but to rout her out of her retreat. The task of finding her devolved upon Thiers : a most devoted adherent of the House of Orleans, and a Minister of the Interior to whom the duties of police espionage attaching to the office were not repugnant. The narrative of his method of discharging them reads like an instalment from a sensational story of mystery and crime.

He strongly suspected, if he did not actually know, that Mme de Berry was in Nantes ; but her secret was well kept, and private houses, and even convents, were searched for her in vain. But then, one day, Thiers received an anonymous letter, which promised him " important revelations on an affair of State," if he could meet his correspondent alone, at midnight, in a solitary spot near the Champs Élysées. This

looked like a plot to murder or kidnap him; and he was a cautious man. He kept the appointment; but he took several detectives with him, with the result that he saw no one. On the following morning, however, he received a second anonymous letter, running thus:

"I asked you to come alone; but you came with an escort: that is why I did not speak to you. If you really wish for the information which I am able to give you, come again to the same place to-night; but you must come unattended."

Even so, Thiers was not fully reassured; but he, nevertheless, did as he was bidden, taking his courage in both hands, and a brace of pistols in his pocket. He waited a few minutes, and then, just as he was beginning to suspect a hoax, a man emerged from the darkness, saying that he was the author of the anonymous communication, and that his name was Deutz. The following dialogue ensued:

"What do you want with me?"

"I have reason to believe that you are looking for the Duchesse de Berry."

"Supposing that I am——"

"I can put you in the way of finding her."

"What is your price?"

"Five hundred thousand francs."

"Very well. If you find her for me, you shall have the money; but you will be kept under surveillance, and, if you fail to find her,

you will be arrested as an agent of the conspiracy."

"Agreed."

This man Deutz was a German Jew, the son of a Rabbi, but a convert—at all events, an alleged convert—to Christianity. He had been in relations with Mme de Berry, and had won the partial confidence of the Legitimists by the ardour of his orthodox professions. If he did not know where Madame was hiding at the moment, at least he knew people whom he could induce to tell him: he proposed to get this information, and to sell it for pieces of silver. Thiers sent him to Nantes, but was careful to send police officers with him, to make sure that he ran straight.

He did not obtain his information quite so easily as he expected, having to deal with people to whom all Jews, whether converted or otherwise, were objects of suspicion. At last, however, Madame herself heard that he was looking for her, and sent for him. Though her friends suspected him, she did not: she even entrusted him with a letter to deliver, and gave him twenty-five louis for his services in delivering it. He took her money, and then went out and betrayed her to the police, who had already surrounded the house, and were watching all the exits: he gave them their signal, and they acted.

It was by the merest accident that his

treachery was not detected in time. At the very moment when he was assuring Mme de Berry of his unflinching devotion to her interests, a letter, written in sympathetic ink, was handed to her. One of her companions, M. de Mesnard, took the necessary steps for making it legible, and found that it contained a warning that she was "about to be betrayed by a person in whom she reposed perfect confidence." "You hear that, Deutz? Perhaps it is you," she said with a smile. "Very possibly," he replied, turning the matter off with a laugh; and very few minutes had passed before she knew his treachery. For another of her companions, M. Guibourg, looked out of window, and saw the police closing in on the house, and called out: "Quick, madame. We are betrayed; we must make haste and hide." Whereupon, they all ran upstairs to the garret, and crawled into the secret chamber, while the gendarmes were searching the lower rooms.

The gendarmes found the dinner-table laid for five; but the only person who presented herself to them was the elder Mlle du Guiny, who explained that she had been expecting guests, but rather imagined that the ferocious aspect of the gendarmes had frightened them away. The gendarmes did not believe that story: they garrisoned every room, and sent for architects and masons to advise and help them in their quest, which was destined to be a long one. The architects demonstrated theo-

retically that the structure of the house was such that it could not possibly contain a secret chamber. The masons banged at all the walls with heavy hammers, but failed to detect any hollow ring indicating such a hiding-place. Night overtook them before they had finished their task. They knocked off work and went home; but the gendarmes were ordered to remain at their posts until the morning. They tempted Mlle du Guiny's cook with offers of money, spreading innumerable pieces of gold before her eyes on the kitchen-table; but that loyal woman resisted the temptation.

Meanwhile, as we know, Mme de Berry and her friends were in the secret chamber behind the fire-place. It was so small a secret chamber that the tallest of them could not even stand upright in it, but had to crouch as if in a cage; and they had nothing to eat except a few lumps of sugar which M. de Mesnard had hurriedly stuffed into his pocket. For sixteen hours they stood thus, huddled together, munching a lump of sugar from time to time; and they would have stood siege even longer, if an accident had not brought about their discovery.

It was a chilly November night, and the gendarmes on guard in the garret began to feel cold, and decided to light the fire. There was no wood or coal in the room, but there was an enormous bundle of the various fashion papers to which Mme de Berry subscribed; so they made a fire of them, and the flames

were soon roaring up the chimney. Unhappily, however, it was by way of the chimney that the secret chamber was provided with air, and it was now, of course, being filled with smoke and flames instead of air. The prisoners were in imminent danger of being suffocated if not of being burnt. They must either surrender, or perish like rats in a hole; and—horror of horrors!—when they tried to press the spring which should have released them, they found it too hot to be pressed. There was nothing for it, after all, but to appeal to the gendarmes for help, for already Madame's skirts were catching fire; so they kicked violently at the panelling to attract attention.

"What's that noise? Who is there?" the startled gendarmes called to them.

"It is us. We surrender. Quick, and help us to get out!" came the reply; and the gendarmes made haste to extinguish the fire and pull down the partition. It was quickly done; and then out stepped a woman, whose arm was scarred with burns, and whose dress was covered with ashes.

"What! Madame la Duchesse! It is you?"

"Yes, it is I. You are Frenchmen and soldiers. I throw myself on the protection of your honour."

So they detained her, doing her no harm, until the general came. She asked if she might

spend the rest of the night where she was, but was told that an apartment had been prepared for her at the castle, and that she must be removed there at once.

"But I shall be insulted in the streets!"

"I pledge myself that you shall not be."

"And, general, we've had nothing to eat for four-and-twenty hours. Would you mind giving the jailer orders to have some hot soup ready for us."

"With pleasure, madame. You shall have your soup, and a good bottle of wine with it."

"I thank you."

That was the serio-comic end of the first sequel of the Duchesse de Berry's civil war. Its second is perhaps too romantic to be related in this work; but we must give the picture of the treacherous Deutz receiving the reward of virtue.

There is no doubt that he regarded—or at least represented—his remuneration in that pleasing light; for he wrote a vindication of his conduct. The arrest of the Duchesse de Berry, so brought about by him, had, he said, saved France from the horrors of a civil war and a foreign invasion. Madame had promised, if she succeeded in her insurrection, to ennoble him; but he had sacrificed his personal interest to his sense of his duties as a citizen. In order to do so he had even braved the peril of assassination by the Legitimists:

"France was my passion; the rule of Louis

Philippe was my Utopia. I made up my mind to perish, a martyr for my cause. 'All for France'—that was my motto. I have done my duty, and conscience is at ease. Long live France! Long live Louis Philippe!"

But he could not persuade the Orleanists to take that view of the matter. For them he had been, and still was, the "dirty Jew" whom they had hired to do dirty work with which they would not have soiled their own fingers. They made that clear to him, even in the act of paying him, as we know from Dumas *fils*, who had the story from Henri Didier, the son of the appointed paymaster. The boy was told by his father to hide behind a curtain at the time when the money was to be handed over, in order that he might learn betimes "what a traitor was, and how one recompensed a traitor for his services." This, according to Dumas, is what Henri Didier saw:

"Deutz was shown in. M. Didier was standing before his desk, on which lay the 500,000 francs, in two heaps of 250,000 francs each. As Deutz approached him, M. Didier signalled to him to stop; then, picking up the tongs, he lifted the two packets of banknotes in them, handed them to Deutz, and pointed to the door, without uttering a single word."

CHAPTER XXII

The Empress Eugénie—Did she "make" the Franco-German War?—The news of Sedan in Paris—Outbreak of the Revolution—Flight of the Empress from the Tuileries—Her appeal to Dr. Evans—The drive to Deauville—The crossing of the Channel in Sir John Burgoyne's yacht.

THE Empress Eugénie is hardly to be spoken of as a woman warrior; but she nevertheless has her place in this gallery on account of the common allegation that she "made" the war which brought the Second Empire to grief.

It is a very improbable charge, and one which certainly cannot be proved. We know that the Empress opposed the war with Austria for the liberation and unification of Italy, on the ground that it would be detrimental to the interests of the Pope; and we also know that, in spite of her opposition, that war took place. It seems over-bold to conclude that, because she was in favour of the Mexican expedition and the war with Prussia, therefore she was responsible for those unfortunate adventures. She certainly was not strong enough to induce Napoleon III to hang on in Mexico after the President of the United States had called his attention to the Monro doctrine; and that, though her ambitions were supported by

the tears and entreaties of the Empress Charlotte, who knelt at the Emperor's feet, imploring him not to desert her husband, the misguided Maximilian.

That the Empress desired the war with Prussia is, indeed, hardly in dispute; but it is equally certain that she was only one of many, on both sides of the frontier, who desired it. Bismarck, as we all know, desired it so intensely that he tampered with the text of a despatch in order to give the French the impression that the King of Prussia had insulted their Ambassador, and so work them up into aggressive fury. That doctored despatch published, it was as if a spark had been dropped on tinder; and, if the Empress helped to fan the resulting flame, the flame, in fact, needed very little fanning. The Paris mob was already shouting "À Berlin!" two days before the meeting of the Council at which the Empress is declared to have pronounced, in fiery language, that war was necessary to save the honour of France; and it certainly was not the Empress who composed the Duc de Grammont's provocative despatches to Benedetti, for Grammont assumed full responsibility for the calamitous decision:

"I determined upon the war," he wrote, "with complete confidence in victory. I believed in the greatness of my country, in her power, in her military valour, as firmly as I believe in my religion."

The Empress, no doubt, also believed in these things, and believed in the famous assurance of a Marshal of France that everything was ready down to the last button on the last soldier's gaiter, and did not believe—if she had ever heard of them—in the grave warnings addressed to the Emperor by Colonel Stoffel, the French military *attaché* at Berlin. "She knew," writes General du Barrail, who desires to fix responsibility on her, "that, sooner or later, war would break out, and, like a woman,—and a passionate women—she thought it best to get it over immediately. She neither saw nor heard any advisers save those who assured her that success was certain": an indication, of course, not that she was exploiting her advisers, but that her advisers were exploiting her.

It has been said that she was responsible for the decision to withhold from the Emperor's knowledge that verdict of his physician concerning the state of his health which might have caused him to hesitate to take the field; but that responsibility was really the physicians' rather than hers. There was a consultation, and the doctors disagreed: Dr. Ricord, who took the pessimistic view, would not separate himself from his colleagues. Prince Napoleon once, at a dinner-party, put all the blame for the suppression of the truth and its consequences on him. "That man," he said, "held the destinies of France in his hands.

If he had spoken, we should not have had the awful war of 1870." But that is not so certain. There were many who held that war was necessary to the dynasty, but that the Emperor —a brave man, but an incapable strategist— was by no means necessary to the war.

So the war was declared, and the Emperor rode out to battle, while the Empress remained in Paris to act as Regent. There was little for her to do except to issue proclamations, and combat a proposal, supported by Prince Napoleon, that the Emperor should, after the first disasters, be recalled to Paris. "His return," she replied, "would look like flight. The one place for the Emperor is with the army." It was the one place in which he could do no good, and might do infinite harm; and Bonapartist writers have maintained that the noble language was really the cloak of a palace intrigue:

"She had," writes M. de la Gorce, "three great grievances against the Emperor—he had grown old; he had become a Liberal; he had been beaten. Weakened at home by his concessions, disarmed by defeat, exhausted by illness, it remained for him only to disappear. But she was still young, and was ambitious, and a mother. And she was Regent. . . . Hence the secret design of providing for France, for the Empire, for the Prince Imperial, even without the Emperor, who would be, more or

less, a victim sacrificed to fate by his own faults."

That statement, however, can neither be proved nor disproved; and events were imminent which were to make palace plots, whether real or imaginary, of no importance whatsoever. Sedan sealed the fate of the dynasty, though it did not bring the end of the war. "Abdicate, and summon M. Thiers," was the advice given by Émile de Girardin, the journalist, when the news of the disaster arrived. "I think, General," said M. de Lesseps to a friend, "that you have eaten your last dinner at the Tuileries." The servants at the Tuileries, except those in immediate attendance on the Empress, began to desert the sinking ship, adjudging themselves small portable ornaments as souvenirs of their services. The Empress herself became sufficiently alarmed to tear up private papers, unsuitable for the inspection of revolutionists, and pulp them in a hot bath; though, at the same time, she sent a reassuring telegram to her mother:

"Do not lose courage, dear mother. France is still able to defend herself if she wishes. I shall do my duty. Your unhappy daughter,

"EUGÉNIE."

But then followed the invasion of the Chamber of Deputies by rioters, the overthrow of the Ministry, and the proclamation of the Republic;

and then the mob proceeded towards the Tuileries, shouting " Down with the Spaniard ! " The Empress asked General Mellinet, a Crimean veteran, whether the Palace could be defended without bloodshed. He feared not. " Then I am resolved," said the Empress, " that no drop of blood shall be shed for me." A little later the Prefect of Police ran in, exclaiming :

" We are betrayed. It is quite impossible to resist. The crowds are already battering down the railings. Her Majesty has no chance except in immediate flight."

With her at the time were the Austrian and Italian Ambassadors—Prince Metternich and Signor Nigra—Admiral Jurien de la Gravière, M. Conti, the Chief of the Emperor's Cabinet, Lieutenant Conneau, and Mme Lebreton, General Bourbaki's sister, her reader and companion. It was the Ambassadors who took the lead and hurried her away. She dared not take her own carriage on account of the livery and the crown painted on the door. Metternich offered his carriage, but it could not be got to the door because of the density and fury of the mob. Admiral Jurien de la Gravière went to the gate to gain time by parleying with the rioters : the others meanwhile followed the corridor leading from the Tuileries to the Louvre. The communicating door was locked ; but, by a happy accident, the Emperor's Treasurer appeared, with a master-key in his

pocket. The party passed through the galleries, and found their way out on to the square in front of the Church of Saint-Germain l'Auxerrois.

They stood there, unnoticed—at all events, unrecognised—watching the rabble which streamed by, shouting: "A bas Badinguet! A bas l'Espagnole! Vive la République!" Metternich went to look for a cab, and luckily found a closed one. A passing boy recognised the Empress, but Nigra found a means of closing his mouth; while Metternich handed the Empress and Mme Lebreton into their conveyance, and gave the driver his direction: the residence of M. Besson, Councillor of State, on the Boulevard Haussmann. But M. Besson was not at home, and the door of his flat was locked. The Empress waited, sitting on the staircase, for a quarter of an hour, and then lost patience. Another cab was hailed, and another direction given. Mme Lebreton suggested that they should drive to the American Legation, but the Empress had a happier thought:

"No, I will go to Dr. Evans. He is an American also, but he has no political responsibilities, and besides is an old friend. I am sure he will not hesitate to render us every assistance we may require."

It was, indeed, an inspiration. Dr. Evans was the fashionable American dentist of the

day : one of the two dentists (the other being Talma) whom the world remembers for other things besides their skill in dental surgery. He was also a gallant man—the sort of man who might be trusted to accept such a commission as was now offered to him, and see the business through without weighing the risk. So when Dr. Evans, who had been strolling out to inspect the Revolution, returned to his house at the corner of the Avenue happily named de l'Impératrice, a servant met him with a message :

" There are two ladies in the library who wish to see you. They have not given their names, and decline to state why they have come here ; but they seem to be very anxious to see you, and have been waiting for you more than an hour."

Ladies suffering from tooth-ache are often exceedingly anxious to see dentists, even after the surgery is closed ; but they do not usually decline to state the nature of their business to the dentist's attendants. So Dr. Evans entered wondering, and was amazed to recognise the Empress, who, at once, explained why she was there :

" You know what has taken place to-day—that the government is in the hands of the Revolutionists. I have come to you for protection and assistance, because I have full

confidence in your devotion to my family. The service I now ask on my behalf and on that of this lady—let me introduce you to Mme Lebreton—will be a severe test of your friendship."

Never before, one imagines, in the history of the world, was such an appeal addressed by an Empress to a dental surgeon; and Dr. Evans rose to the occasion with chivalry, and faced it with resource. Of course the Empress was welcome to his help and hospitality. It was most unfortunate that he was expecting a few friends to dinner—it would not be wise to invite suspicion by putting the party off. His friend, Dr. Crane, however, would entertain his guests for him, and get rid of them as early in the evening as possible. Meanwhile, there was no danger to be apprehended. Her Majesty had not been traced to his house, and it was the last place in Paris in which any one would think of looking for her—who would suspect her of suspending her flight in order to pay a visit to the dentist? It would be unwise for her to drive, as she proposed, to Poisy, and there pick up the night train to Havre; she would almost certainly be recognised by some fellow passenger. In the early morning, she would have a fair chance of getting off unobserved; he would himself drive her to Deauville, where Mrs. Evans was staying: there she would probably be able to hire a boat to take her to England.

The Empress agreed, and produced a bundle of passports which she had acquired in view of emergencies. One of them, covering the case of a British physician and a patient, was selected as the most appropriate. Dr. Crane would impersonate the physician, and the Empress the invalid; Dr. Evans would pretend to be her brother, and Mme Lebreton would travel as her nurse. So it was arranged; and, after a night's rest, the start was made at five o'clock in the morning, the Empress wearing no disguise except a veil, and carrying no luggage except a small reticule. At the Porte Maillot Dr. Evans leant in front of the Empress in order to answer the questions of the officer on guard. His statement that he had promised to spend the day with friends in the country was accepted. They drove through, the Empress chattering the while, telling Dr. Evans why she had refused to abdicate, and how much she would have preferred to remain in Paris during the inevitable siege:

"I could have been of service in many ways. I could have been an example of devotion to my country. I could have visited the hospitals; I could have gone to the outposts; I could have encouraged and stimulated the defence at every point of danger by my presence. . . . Oh! why could they not have let me die before the walls of Paris!"

And so forth; for if the Empress lacked

discretion, she, most assuredly, did not lack courage. She was to have, and to take, her chance of proving that fact before the journey was over.

An exciting journey, of which the particulars should be read in Dr. Evans's graphic *Memoirs*. How the carriage broke down; how other carriages, and relays of horses, had to be intrigued for; how the travellers got hungry and were glad to divide a saveloy; how, at the wayside inn at which they stopped for the night, another guest had to be bribed to give up his room to the "invalid" and the "nurse": —these are details which cannot be related within the narrow compass of these pages, though one may pause to say a word of the courtesy of the shopkeeper of Lisieux, who, not knowing who the ladies were, brought chairs for them when they took refuge from the rain in his door-way, while Dr. Evans and Dr. Crane were engaged in a long search for a conveyance. They apologised for the liberty they had taken; but:

"That," said the young man, "is a liberty which belongs to everybody in France on a rainy day. Should your carriage not come, and should you get tired of standing, if you will come into the office, we shall be happy to find seats for you."

The carriage came, however, and Deauville was duly reached. Dr. Crane and Mme Lebreton

entered the Hôtel du Casino and asked for rooms; while Dr. Evans smuggled the Empress up to Mrs. Evans's apartment. A few drops of rain gave him an excuse for opening his umbrella, which he held so as to screen the Empress's face. She greeted Mrs. Evans, and then fell back exhausted into an arm-chair, exclaiming, "Oh! Mon Dieu! Je suis sauvée." But, of course, it still remained to get her across the Channel, on which a storm was raging—the famous storm in which the *Captain* went down with all hands.

Dr. Evans went down to the harbour to see what could be arranged. He found the yacht *Gazelle*, and introduced himself to its owner, Sir John Burgoyne, to whom he told his secret and preferred his request. It was hardly weather in which such a yacht as his could safely put out to sea; and the service which he was asked to render was not without its political significance. Dr. Evans argued with him. "In our country," he said, "every man will run any risk for a woman, and especially for a lady whose life is in danger." Sir John was not thinking of any risk to himself; but he had Lady Burgoyne with him. It was agreed to refer the matter to her; and she did not hesitate.

"Why not?" she said. "I shall certainly be very pleased if we can be of any assistance to her, and I can readily understand how

anxious she must be at the present moment to find a refuge. Let her come to us to-night, or as soon as she can safely do so."

So Dr. Evans smuggled the Empress down to the harbour at midnight, in the gale—walking three quarters of a mile over sand-drifts, stumbling into holes full of water, and arriving bedraggled, drenched, and splashed, from head to foot, with mud. The ladies were very glad of the changes of clothing provided by Lady Burgoyne, and also of the hot punch provided by Sir John: they retired to their bunks, and the voyage began at about seven on the following morning.

The gale was fierce, and got fiercer. The spinnaker boom was lost: it was necessary to reef the mainsail, run down the jib, and set the storm-jib. Sir John Burgoyne proposed to return for refuge to a French port; but the Empress begged him not to, assuring him that she was not afraid. He said no more, but continued on his course.

"The Empress told me afterwards," writes Dr. Evans, "that during this night she several times thought we were sinking, and that the noise and the creaking were such as to cause her to believe that the yacht would certainly go to pieces before many minutes. 'I was sure we were lost,' she said; 'but, singular as it may seem, I did not feel alarmed in the least. I have always loved the sea, and it had for me

no terrors then. Were I to disappear, I thought to myself, death, perhaps, could not come more opportunely, nor provide me with a more desirable grave.' "

By degrees, however, the storm abated, and the party landed at Ryde, giving their names at the hotel in which they sought shelter as "Mr. Thomas and sister, with a lady friend." They looked so dilapidated that the Pier Hotel declined to accommodate them, and the York Hotel would only give them small rooms at the top of the house. But there was a Bible there; and the Empress who, as a Catholic, was not very familiar with Holy Writ, opened it, in idle curiosity, and lighted upon a consoling passage: "The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want. He maketh me to lie down in green pastures; He leadeth me beside the still waters." One can imagine that the promise of "still waters" struck her as particularly apposite at that hour, and that the only text which could have pleased her better would have been that which promises that, in the life after death, "there shall be no more sea."

Her adventures were over, however; and she was able to go to Hastings and meet the Prince Imperial, who had just arrived there after passing through Belgium. Dr. Evans found a house for her—the house in which she lived, for so many years, at Chislehurst; and she settled down in it. But, though her

adventures were over, she had not yet done with the diplomacy arising out of the war and the Revolution. There were still to be what some call negotiations, and others call intrigues: those intrigues (or negotiations) in which were mixed up Bazaine, Bourbaki, the Prussian Ambassador at the Court of St. James's, and the mysterious Henri Régnier.

Perhaps we shall, some day, know the full truth about that story; perhaps we shall never know it. It is not certain that the Empress herself knew at the time, or knows now, who Régnier was, or by whom he was accredited; though the probability is that he was a secret agent in the Prussian service. The purpose of the intrigue (or negotiation) in which he was employed as a go-between was to arrange a peace: the Empress, as Regent, to conclude that peace over the heads of the Provisional Government of National Defence, and Bazaine's army to be released from Metz in order to guarantee the observation of the terms agreed to. Bourbaki was allowed to go to Chislehurst to discuss the matter with the Empress; and a certain amount of fresh light is thrown upon the proceedings by the Bernstorff papers. There is an account in them of a secret interview between the Empress and Count Bernstorff at Lady Cowley's house in Albemarle Street:

"I remember," the editor writes, "one point of curious interest. My father told me

that the Empress was obviously rouged. She dabbed the tears out of her eyes during the interview, after the custom of ladies who do not wish the salt drops to injure the artificial colouring of their cheeks."

A very natural desire. But the negotiations, very naturally, and most rightly and properly came to nothing. Bismarck may or may not have been willing to grant better terms to the Empress than to Jules Favre; the Empress may or may not have believed that she was serving the true interests of France by treating with him. But the attempt, nevertheless, was an attempt to override the will of the French people in the interest of the House of Bonaparte, and to place a Bonapartist army, under a Bonapartist general, in the field against the Republic. The Empress was acting as a wife and a mother rather than as a patriot; and it was well that she should fail. What the republicans thought of the attempt was made clear when Bazaine stood his trial for treachery, and was told by the Duc d'Aumale, in reply to his contention that, at the time of his surrender, there was no Government in the country from which he held any commission: "Il y avait toujours la France."

CHAPTER XXIII

Catherine the Great of Russia—Her civil war against her husband—His discomfiture, arrest, abdication, and death in prison—Was she murdered there?—Was Catherine responsible?

THE preceding chapters must have given the impression that women warriors, if they achieve distinction, are generally Frenchwomen. Even the English Queens on our list have mostly been French by birth. One might also, of course, mention Queen Elizabeth on account of the great military and naval events which happened in her time; but her personal association with them is hardly more intimate than that of Queen Victoria with the Crimean expedition and the Indian Mutiny. We have all seen pictures of Queen Elizabeth reviewing the train-bands at Tilbury; but a review is not a battle. Nor can it be contended that the special glories of the Elizabethan age were primarily due to Elizabeth, or even that she treated her great generals and her great admirals particularly well. Russia and Spain are countries in which we may discover heroines more definitely distinguished for specific martial exploits. We will take the case of Russia first.

The case of Russia is, of course, in this connection, the case of Catherine II, commonly called Catherine the Great. How much of the glory of the conquests of her reign was due to her, and how much to Potemkin, may be disputed; and most serious historians will probably agree that Potemkin is entitled to the lion's share of it. Even the civil war in which Catherine overthrew her husband, the debauched and drunken Peter III, was less her work than that of her lover, Gregory Orloff, and his brother Alexis; but she was, at any rate, up to her neck in the conspiracy which they promoted in her interests. Her life was staked on the success of the game, and she knew it; and she mounted her horse and rode astride to the battle which there was to be no need for her to fight.

Her summons came suddenly, at an hour when she was not expecting it. The conspirators had heard that their conspiracy had been betrayed; and they knew that, if they were to act at all, it was imperative that they should act at once. So Alexis Orloff tapped at Catherine's bedroom door at Peterhof, and bade her get up at once and come with him in the carriage which he had waiting for her; and she joined him as quickly as she could, and raced through the white night of a northern midsummer—a race in which, if a crown was the prize, death on the scaffold, or in a dungeon, was as certainly the penalty of failure—the

immediate goal being the barracks occupied by those guardsmen whom the promise of handfuls of gold and bucketfuls of vodka had corrupted from their fidelity.

The soldiers, like Catherine, were taken by surprise. They hurried down to her, half dressed, but dressing as they came. She harangued them while they were completing their toilets, and they cheered her till the rafters rang, while she called for a priest to consecrate her usurpation. And then, if the writer may be allowed to quote a previous work of his own —*The Comedy of Catherine the Great*:

"They fetched the regimental chaplain from his bed and hustled him down into the barrack-yard—soldiers on each side of him, gripping him firmly by the arm. They told him what to pray for, and he prayed for it. They told him to hold out the cross to be kissed, and he obeyed them; and then they formed a procession, bidding the priest carry the cross aloft, and pushing him along in front."

No violence was needed for the suppression of the few violent attempts at resistance: beyond the smashing of the windows of a few wine-shops, hardly any material damage was done. In a very brief space of time Catherine's supporters, 18,000 strong, had escorted her in triumph to the Winter Palace, where she dined at an open window, *coram populo*, lifting her glass, from time to time, to pledge the mob

outside. The Senate and the Holy Synod had, in the meantime, paid their respects to her; and the printing-presses had been set to work on a manifesto, and a communication to the Ambassadors and Ministers Plenipotentiary:

"Her Imperial Majesty, having to-day ascended the throne of All the Russias, in response to the unanimous wishes and pressing solicitations of all her faithful subjects, and all true patriots of this Empire, has given orders that the news of the event shall be communicated to all the Foreign Ministers residing at her Court, and that they shall be assured that Her Imperial Majesty desires to maintain friendly relations with the sovereigns, their masters. The Ministers will be informed, at the earliest possible moment, on what day it will be convenient for them to present their compliments to Her Imperial Majesty and offer their congratulations."

It seemed as if all was over except the shouting; it was said, afterwards, that Peter collapsed "as easily as a naughty child lets itself be sent to bed without its supper." Still, it was by no means certain, at the moment, that Peter would prove so amenable. He had 1,500 soldiers actually with him, and others within reach. In attendance on him, moreover, was Marshal Munnich, the most renowned of Russian soldiers—a warrior who, having

smashed the Turks in the past, might well expect to be able to smash Catherine's faction now. So that Catherine needed all her nerve.

She had plenty of nerve; she took the bold course at once, marching against her husband's Palace at Oranienbaum, putting on a uniform, and riding astride at the head of her men. And her husband, who was a craven as well as a drunkard, fled before her, brave Marshal Munnich foaming at the mouth because he would not fight—because no one fought except a few peasants, armed with scythes, whom Gregory Orloff scattered with the flat of his sword:

"What!" the octogenarian warrior exclaimed. "You're not going to put yourself at the head of your troops and die like an Emperor! If you're afraid of being hurt, hang on to a crucifix. Nobody will dare to touch you then, and I'll do the fighting for you, myself."

But Peter would not fight. His mistress, Elizabeth Vorontsof—another woman in war—persuaded him not to. She had an idea that, if he abandoned his throne, Catherine would be willing to leave him the Grand Duchy of Holstein, and that she might become his Grand-Duchess. So he dismantled the Oranienbaum fortifications, and wrote to Catherine, whose

reply was a request that he would immediately sign the following Act of Abdication :

"During the brief period of my absolute reign over the Russian Empire I have discovered that I am not on a level with my task, but am incapable of governing that Empire either as a sovereign ruler or in any fashion whatsoever. I have also observed its decline, and the imminent peril of its complete collapse, which would have covered me with eternal disgrace. After mature deliberation, therefore, acting under no compulsion, I solemnly declare, before Russia, and before the Universe, that I resign the government of the said Empire for ever ; that I have no desire to rule over it, whether as absolute ruler or under any other form of constitution ; and that I will never seek to do so by means of any support that I may be able to obtain. In faith whereof I take my oath, before God and the Universe, having written and signed this Act of Abdication with my own hand."

He wrote it out, and signed it, too broken a man to stipulate even that the offensive reflections on his character and competence should be toned down ; so that Catherine's triumph was complete. If she had not actually fought, she had at least been prepared to do so ; and it was because she had been prepared to do so that she had gained so easy a victory. We may think that she humi-

liated her husband with unnecessary cruelty; but she was acting under provocation, and in self-defence. Peter had insulted her in public, and had announced his intention of shaving her head and sending her to a nunnery. A woman of Catherine's charm, who enjoyed life as Catherine did, would naturally take extreme measures to avoid such treatment, and could hardly be expected to show merciful consideration to a man who had threatened her with it.

So that Peter, as soon as he had signed his Act of Abdication, was arrested and treated with contumely. He heard the soldiers on the road cheering for Catherine as he passed them; and then, if another quotation from *The Comedy of Catherine the Great* may be allowed:

"It was not Catherine who received him—her attitude was like that of the litigant who stands aside on the ground that the matter in dispute has passed out of his hands into those of his solicitor. This matter was in the hands of the soldiers; and their hands were rough. They sent off Peter's aide-de-camp in one direction and his mistress in another; they turned out Peter's pockets, scattering handfuls of diamonds on the ground. 'Now undress,' they said; and Peter stood, on the grand staircase of his own Palace, bare-footed, clad only in his shirt, a miserable object of mockery,

crying like a child. Then at last they threw a shabby cloak over him, and drove him off to Ropscha, where he was to be confined. According to one account, he asked that his mistress, his negro servant, and his monkey might accompany him. According to another account, he begged only for a bottle of burgundy and a pipe. They gave him, at any rate, a Bible and a pack of cards; and he proceeded to beguile the time by building toy fortresses."

Presently he wrote Catherine another letter from his prison. He was "disgusted," he assured her, "at the wickedness of mankind," and, in order that it might trouble him the less, he "was resolved henceforward to devote himself to a philosophical life." But he got no chance of doing that—he died in prison. The official bulletin was to the effect that he had been suddenly carried off by "hemorrhoidal colic"—a complaint to which he was officially stated to be subject. It was an obvious lie; and there can be no doubt whatever that Peter strangled in prison by Alexis Orloff, who was remarkable for his physical strength. The only question really at issue is whether Catherine ordered or was privy to the outrage.

D'Alembert thought that she was. He declined Catherine's invitation to visit her on the ground that "fatal colics are too frequent in that country"; but d'Alembert, of course, had only rumour to guide him. This is what

Catherine's friend, Princess Dashkof, wrote on the subject in her Memoirs:

"I could not bring myself to enter the Palace until the following day. I then found the Empress with a dejected air, visibly labouring under much uneasiness of mind. These were her words when she addressed me: 'My horror at this death is inexpressible; it is a blow which strikes me to the earth.' 'It is a death too sudden, madam,' replied I, 'for your glory and for mine.'"

Yet Princess Dashkof believed that Catherine knew nothing of the crime until after it had been committed; and the present writer has indicated elsewhere that he endorsed Princess Dashkof's verdict, basing his view, not upon the evidence—for there is no evidence worth speaking of—in favour of either conclusion, but on his general impression of Catherine's character.

"Unless," he wrote, "she was cruel and vindictive on this one occasion, she was very far from being a cruel and vindictive woman; nor was she, so far as one can judge, a woman to be impelled to crime by fear. But she was a woman in the hands of men; a stranger in a land which had not outgrown the traditions of savagery—a land in which one Emperor had fried his enemies in frying-pans, and another

had knouted his own son to death, and both were styled ' the Great.' "

But Catherine may, nevertheless, have been ready to fall in with the view of the kind friends who recommended her to make the best of a bad job which might turn out to be a blessing in disguise. Apparently she did so; and it is difficult to see what else there was for her to do.

CHAPTER XXIV

Spanish wars—The Maid of Saragossa—The shooting of Cabrera's mother and other hostages in the Carlist War—The nuns of Seville—The termagants of Barcelona.

In our Spanish section one name stands out pre-eminently: France is hardly more proud of the Maid of Orleans than Spain of the Maid of Saragossa. Unhappily, however, one cannot make a long story about her without trespassing on the domain of romance; the authentic facts are few and will fill but little space.

Spain, it will be remembered, rose, in 1808, against King Joseph—Il Rey Intruso—defied Napoleon, and appealed to England for help. Saragossa, in particular, astonished Napoleon and his Marshals by the vigour of its defence, and showed them how a city could be defended, house by house, and street by street. Laconic despatches were interchanged between the French General Verdier and the Spanish General Palafox:

"Headquarters, Santa Engracia.—Capitulation?"

"Headquarters, Saragossa.—War to the knife."

And the Spaniards gave the French war to the knife. The civilians fought as well as the soldiers, the monks as well as the laymen, the women as well as the men ; and the memorable scene which concerns us here was enacted at the Portillo Gate. We shall, no doubt, be safest in following Professor Oman's account of it :

" The gunners at the small battery in the gate had been shot down one after another by the musketry of the assailants, the final survivors falling even before they could discharge the last gun that they had loaded. The infantry supports were flinching and the French were closing in, when a young woman named Agostina Zaragoza, whose lover (an artillery sergeant) had just fallen, rushed forward, snatched the lighted match from his dying hand, and fired the undischarged twenty-four-pounder into the head of the storming column. The enemy was shaken by a charge of grape delivered at ten paces, the citizens, shamed by Agostina's example, rushed back to reoccupy the battery, and the assault was beaten off. Palafox states that the incident occurred before his own eyes : he gave the girl a commission as sub-lieutenant of artillery, and a warrant for a life pension : she was seen a year later by several English witnesses, serving with her battery in Andalusia."

In a footnote, Professor Oman adds :

"Sir Charles Vaughan was introduced to the heroine by Palafox while he was staying in Saragossa. . . . He describes her as 'a handsome young woman of the lower class,' and says that, when he met her, she was wearing on her sleeve a small shield of honour with the name 'Zaragoza' inscribed on it. The fact that the dead sergeant was her lover is given by Palafox in his short narrative of the siege, which ought to be a good authority enough."

A further authority is W. Jacob, M.P., who travelled in Spain in the years 1809-10, and who says that he met Agostina at Seville, that she was wearing a blue artillery tunic, with one epaulette, over a short skirt, and that she was present when Lord Wellesley entered Seville, and was welcomed by the Junta. One may as well add Napier's commentary,—the commentary of a chronicler temperamentally inclined to scepticism, but driven by the facts to faith:

"Romantic tales of women rallying the troops and leading them forward at the most dangerous period of the siege were current; their truth may be doubted. Yet, when suddenly environed with horrors, the sensitiveness of women, driving them to a kind of frenzy, might have produced actions above the heroism of men."

And the proof is clear that the sensitiveness of one woman did produce that effect.

Another story of the same war, worth reviving in the same connection, relates to the siege of

Badajoz. Our soldiers, after storming that citadel, got out of hand, drank freely of whatever they could get to drink, rioted, looted, and ravished, and lost all power of discriminating between their French enemies and their Spanish friends. One of their victims was Doña Juanna Maria de los Dolores de Leon—a young lady, as her name indicates, of noble birth. Her earrings were torn from her ears; her life—if not her honour also—was in peril. But there came to her rescue, in the nick of time, a certain young Lieutenant Smith, who not only saved her, but also fell in love with her and married her: a very notable romance of war, seeing that Lieutenant Smith lived to become Sir Harry Smith, Governor of Cape Colony, and that his Spanish bride lived to give her name to a town which stood a siege hardly less famous than that of Badajoz—the gallant town of Ladysmith in Natal.

We turn to the first Carlist War, and there too we find stories of women involved in the tragedies of war. In that terrible civil struggle they suffered chiefly as hostages, no mercy being shown to them by the generals of either side. The most awful of all the stories is that of the shooting by the Cristinos of the aged mother of the Carlist General Cabrera. Cabrera had shot two *alcaldes;* and the execution of his mother was the Cristino reply:

"On the morning of February 16, sitting

in the stocks, and in irons, she confessed, but was not allowed to receive the sacrament. She was shot without trial in the Barbacana at eleven a.m. She was a little over fifty-three years of age. The civilised world was moved by this barbarous act. Lord Aberdeen, on March 18, in the House of Lords, called it an assassination."

So writes William Bollaert, financial agent to Don Carlos; and William Bollaert also tells us how Cabrera exercised reprisals on his own women hostages. "You will go with me," he told them, "until my mother is liberated; if she suffers, you will. I cannot believe they will harm her; so be tranquil." But they had harmed her; and now:

"The day after the execution it was known to Cabrera's aides. On the 19th he asked them the cause of their gloom. On the 20th, being at Valderobes, the commandant, Juan Portigaz, was with him at 8 a.m., and, on his asking for news, replied, 'Some say your mother has been sent away from Tortosa; some that they will kill her.' 'No,' replied Cabrera, 'not while I have Fontiveros' wife and the others. . . . Come not to me with mysteries. . . . What of my mother?' 'I shudder; I have to tell you the fatal words—your mother is no more!' 'Portigaz, I wish to die. No—to live, to revenge her death!' exclaimed Cabrera. His sufferings were dreadful. During the day he

had indited and had printed the following: 1. Noguera and all who serve the Queen are traitors. 2. To be shot at once: the Señoras Fontiveros, Cinta Tos, Mariana Guardia, and Francisca Urquiza; also others up to thirty in number. 4. For one shot by the Cristinos I will shoot twenty.' An hour afterwards the sentences pronounced on those in his power were carried into execution."

In the end, of course, Cabrera was beaten by Espartero, and the Cristinos triumphed over the Carlists; and then General Espartero and Queen Cristina quarrelled, and there was further fighting. We are only concerned with the fighting in so far as women were involved in it; but they were involved in it on more than one occasion. Espartero was an anti-clerical; and consequently the nuns were his enemies to a woman—especially when he began a siege of Seville, and shells hit the convents. Then the nuns descended into the streets, screaming that Espartero was the most shameless and sacrilegious of all imaginable ruffians, and appealing to all pious men to fight him with all their force. It may have been partly, though it certainly was not entirely, on account of their envenomed hostility that he raised the siege and fled.

There was also, at about the same date, a striking scene at a siege of Barcelona—an assault upon the gates by an army of 6,000 women.

The story, which has its humorous aspects, is related by Hughes in his *Revelations of Spain* :

When the siege began the bulk of the female population retired from the city, taking their children with them. Unfortunately, not expecting the siege to last long, they left their winter clothes behind them ; with the result that, when the weather became wet and cold, they found themselves " shivering in the blast, and suffering from the frequent rains, against which their gossamer garments were a miserably poor protection." They sought permission, therefore, to return to Barcelona for their winter garments ; but the garrison suspecting treachery, refused them permission to enter :

" Their women," writes Hughes, " were regarded as would that Adam had looked on his in Paradise, in the light of a satanic snare ; they dreaded lest their valour should ooze from their lips in tender salutes, and their heroism melt like snow in the presence of their too long separated beauties, whose southern ardour would be more than a match for the firmness of Coriolanus ; they thought—that is, the few classics among them thought—of the Trojan horse and his bellyful of warriors ; they twitted their mischievous Helens on the wall, and dreaded Narvaez's forces, *et dona ferentes*."

But the women advanced none the less, prepared to face bristling lines of bayonets

" for the spectre of a shawl or the shred of a petticoat " :

" Their blankets, their shawls, and their petticoats ! Their petticoats, their shawls, and their blankets ! Were they to be left to shiver and to starve in the outer world, and their ever-loving lords to be the heartless dragons by whom permission for one single hour to seek these needful articles of clothing was to be sternly refused ? It could not be. The ghosts of their emaciated limbs would cry to La Mancha's sheep for vengeance ! "

Their eloquence, however, was of no avail ; and so their rage became ungovernable. They dashed aside the bayonets, and leapt upon the astonished sentries—and with great effect :

" They mangled the citizen-soldiers' faces, tore their hair, damaged their eyes, and covered their cheeks with scratches ; threw them on the ground, disarmed them, rushed over their panting bodies, and flung their muskets in the ditch. The Junta of Defence and improvised authorities of the city became seriously alarmed, two battalions of Petulia were called out to reinforce the ordinary guards and pickets, and the gunners were sent to the ramparts."

But the resources of their ingenuity were not yet exhausted. The petticoats were a prize worth fighting for, and the women continued to fight for them :

"*Furor arma ministrat.* The ladies took off their stockings and filled them with stones. They brandished these formidable weapons round their heads, and wielded them like life-protectors. At every blow a bearded soldier fell. Others, who preferred a serviceable shawl to the flimsy mantilla, tied a ponderous stone in one end, and from the other plied it as a flail. Others, again, made sacks perform the functions of mallets, and baskets of basket-hilted swords, sacking the town with the former weapon, and carrying by storm with the latter. . . . Some, with their nails, did terrible execution, and all performed prodigies of valour with their tongues. Veterans fled from the aspect of their enraged dames, and the voices of the assailants were more potent to scare the defenders than a battery of field artillery. For half an hour these new and unheard-of hostilities raged with unremitting violence, and Barcelona trembled to its foundations."

If it was comic, it was also serious. The petticoats had become a symbol, and the women were fighting for them as if for a sentimental grievance or an ideal. In order to disperse them it was actually necessary to bring out the guns, and to order volley-firing. But when that was done :

"No flock of wild geese, alarmed by the fowler, ever fled in greater precipitation ; away they scampered, matron and maid, in the

confusion of a general panic, and never halted till they reached the main streets of Gracia, more than half a league distant, the head-quarters of the Captain-General. . . . Happily, though many were scratched, and some slightly wounded, not one amongst the whole army of 6,000 met with a serious mishap."

And for a good reason—because the chivalry of the men had not deserted them in the hour of peril :

" The cannon were loaded, and so was the musketry, but both were fired over the assailants' heads ; so that the angels were merely fluttered and frightened, draggled a good deal in the mud through which they plunged topsy-turvy in their precipitate flight, and scratched a little in the face by the onslaught of their inordinate valour."

So that their enterprise was a failure, and not even a particularly glorious failure ; and the sequel of the failure was unpleasant. They "were left for a month longer shivering and starving in the cold and wet, with no protection either of clothing or bed furniture to preserve them from the inclemencies of a rigorous winter " ; and a subscription had to be opened for their relief.

That was the tragic side of this serio-comic romance of war. Viewed in its broad outlines,

however, it indubitably borders on the farcical; and there was no one among the players with whose name we need burden our memories. Our next chapter shall deal with more serious matters, and see how war affected the fortunes of famous Spanish Queens.

CHAPTER XXV

Queen Cristina of Spain and General Espartero—General Leon's attempt to kidnap Queen Isabella—Fighting on the palace staircase—Gallant defence by the Halberdiers—Capture and execution of General Leon—Further fighting in 1854 and 1866—The Revolution of 1868.

THE question at issue in the Carlist War was a simple one : Should a bad King or a bad Queen have the sovereign power in Spain? Chivalry favoured the cause of the bad Queen, who was still a baby, and therefore not known to be bad; piety favoured the cause of the bad King, who was confidently expected to take money away from laymen and give it to clergymen. Those were the guiding principles which determined the multitude in taking sides; while, from the point of view of Queen Cristina, the widow of the unconscionable Ferdinand VII, and Don Carlos, his unconscionable brother, the kingdom of Spain, and everything contained in it, was simply a patrimony which obviously belonged to one or other of them Neither of them would give way; so they fought for it with devilish ferocity—how devilish our story of the shooting of Cabrera's mother, and the

retaliatory shooting of the wives of the Cristino officers, has already shown.

Cristina, in short, is as striking an example as history produces of woman behind the scenes of war, pressing springs and setting the machinery of war in motion. She intrigued for her daughter's kingdom at her husband's death-bed, knowing perfectly well that she—or rather her supporters—would have to fight for it. In order to acquire supporters, she made promises of constitutional reform which she had no intention of fulfilling if she could help it. When the war was in progress she fomented jealousies among her generals, pitting one of them against another—pitting Narvaez, in particular, against Espartero; and when her quarrel with Espartero compelled her abdication of the office of Regent, she went to Paris, intrigued with Espartero's enemies, and brought about a second civil war, in order to recover that dignity, and avenge herself on her antagonists.

It is a mute point whether we should say that she made use of Espartero's enemies or that Espartero's enemies made use of her; on the whole, perhaps it is safest to say that they exploited each other to their mutual satisfaction. Cristina, at any rate, got back to Spain, and Espartero, after a brief resistance, made a hurried flight, execrated by the nuns into whose convents at Seville we have seen him throwing shells. The multitude was fickle

enough to receive her with acclamations, after having expelled her with taunts and threats; and she was able to embrace her "Isabelita" amid ringing cheers. And Isabelita had, in the meantime, thanks to her mother, acquired some experience of the operations of war. Isabelita, in fact, had had a very narrow escape from being kidnapped by her mother's friends.

The banner of rebellion had been raised by Leopold O'Donnell at Pampeluna; and other leaders had engineered other revolts in other provincial towns. Isabella and her sister, the future Duchesse de Montpensier, were living in the royal Palace, on the outskirts of Madrid—a place so lonely, according to Washington Irving, who was then American Minister in Spain, "that ten minutes' gallop from its walls takes you into scenes as savage and deserted as any of Salvator Rosa's." The plan was to carry the girls off to the insurgent headquarters, and fight Espartero in their name as well as their mother's. Generals Leon and Concha were charged with the execution of it; and they had bribed the troops on guard without the Palace, though they had not thought it worth while to try to tamper with the Halberdiers on guard within. There were only a score of these—under the command of General Domingo Dulce—and it was not to be supposed that they would make any defence worth considering. It seemed certain that the rush would succeed,

and that, if only the kidnappers got ten minutes' start down the dark and solitary valley, pursuit would be unavailing.

Isabella was eleven years old at the time—her sister a year younger. The head governess in charge of them was the Countess Mina, the widow of the famous guerilla leader of the Peninsular War, from whom we have a long and exciting account of the adventure. Mme Mina had left the children in charge of an assistant governess at half-past six, meaning to return to them at a quarter to eight. She was about to do so when she heard a strange noise for which she could not account—shouting and cheering in one of the exterior courts. She had no special reason for apprehending danger, but nevertheless judged it well to hurry, running first into the Crystal Gallery where the Halberdiers were stationed, and then on to the head of the main staircase, where she could see what was happening. This is what she saw:

"A considerable number of armed men were on the landing of the Lions; while the Halberdiers, also armed and ready for action, were stationed by the balustrade at the edge of the staircase. They were receiving the first volley of the rebels just at the moment when I passed."

She was under fire, but was not hit, though mirrors were smashed to right and left of her. She was still under fire—or believed that she

was—when she reached the door of the Princesses' apartment, and banged at it, demanding instant admission. The timorous women within kept her waiting for some time, but withdrew the bolt at last, and she entered and found her eleven-year-old Queen in an agony of terror, asking whether the men who were making the noise were "rebels" and whether they had "come for her." Nor would they be reassured by the statement that nothing in particular had happened or was happening. They sobbed in the arms of their nurses and governesses, shrieking: "What is it? What is it? I won't be good unless you tell me." They were told something—as much as it seemed good, or necessary, to tell them; and then it was: "Inez! Inez! Please hear me say my prayers!"

The governess, the under-governess, and the nurses themselves, in fact, knew nothing except that the Palace was being attacked and defended, that the staircase was being assailed and held, that the Halberdiers had taken cover behind the stone balustrade, and that they and the mutineers were potting at each other. What would happen next depended upon many things: the royal party could only wait upon events, and prepare for possibilities.

"At about half-past ten," Mme Mina reported, "we managed to persuade the Princesses to lie down, though we took the precaution of

making them do so with their clothes on, so that, whatever happened, we might not be found unprepared. In order that our attention might not be divided, we improvised a bed for the Infanta in the Queen's alcove ; and we had hardly put the two to bed there when a bullet came through the window, breaking the glass, tearing off the hinge, and remaining embedded in the shutter ; so that if, in our excitement, we had forgotten to fasten the shutter, her Royal Highness might have been killed, and would almost certainly have been hit."

An idea occurred to Mme Mina : to force a way through an old door which had recently been bricked up, and escape along a corridor to a remote corner of the Palace, where they might hide until a rescue party reached them. She made the attempt, but failed. It was a mason's, not a governess's work ; it needed to be done with a pick-axe, not with a poker. There was nothing for it but to trust the Halberdiers, who had sent an urgent message to Espartero, appealing for help, but might, or might not, be able to hold out until help came. Meanwhile, the fusillade continuing :

" At twelve o'clock," Mme Mina proceeds, " we decided to remove the Princesses to an inner room, the position of which seemed to offer greater security, while the thickness of the walls promised protection against any fire which might be directed at the windows. We

could still hear the firing very clearly there—the firing in the Hall of the Ambassadors in particular made a terrible noise; but still the Princesses were somewhat reassured, and the noise of the volleys no longer seemed to trouble them very much."

Nature, in short, was asserting itself. These were late hours for the children—they were sleepy and also hungry. No supper, no breakfast, no dinner, so long as the siege lasted—that was the prospect which alarmed them most; but even upon that prospect they were too tired to dwell. Mattresses were spread for them on the floor, out of the reach of bullets; they fell asleep, and slept so soundly that a bullet smashed the window without disturbing them. And, while they slept, the battle raged.

It had begun, as we have seen, at about eight o'clock in the evening; it continued to rage, all through the night, until about six in the morning. Then the fusillading ceased, and friendly voices were heard. The door was opened, and the Steward of the Palace presented himself, and told Mme Mina how the situation had been saved in the nick of time. The despatch-bearer had got through, and the troops had been called out—cavalry as well as infantry, with a view to pursuit as well as deliverance. The mutineers had dispersed, many of them cut down in the act of flight; and the Halberdiers sought humble permission

to kiss Her Majesty's hand while the horsemen chased Generals Leon and Concha down the valley in the dark. Concha escaped from them; but they caught Leon, and he faced a firing party, in full uniform, with all his medals on his breast.

That was Isabella's first experience of the realities of war, but by no means her last. *Reculer pour mieux sauter* was her mother's motto. Baffled in her first attempt, Cristina soon tried again, helped, this time, by Narvaez and Espiroz, as well as Concha and O'Donnell. Espartero's Government collapsed like a house of cards, and two invading armies converged upon Madrid. The National Militia made its preparations to resist them; and Isabella and her sister—the prizes of the encounter—were once more in imminent peril. The National Guard, as we read in one of Washington Irving's letters, "was resolved to dispute the ground street by street, and to make the last stand in the royal Palace"; while Mendizabal, the leader of the party, threatened that, if pushed to the utmost, he would sally forth with the Queen and her sister in each hand, put himself in the midst of the troops, and fight his way out of the city."

Nothing came of the threat, as it happened: the resistance was collapsing so fast in the provinces that Madrid was glad to make terms. For a little while, however, the risk seemed very grave; and the *corps diplomatique* as-

sembled and decided that the task of saving the Queen devolved upon them. They were prepared, they announced—every man of them—to proceed to the Palace, and "remain there during the time of peril," placing themselves and their diplomatic immunity between the little Queen and any possible assailant, believing that the divinity which hedges an Ambassador would protect her better than any company of Nationals or Halberdiers. Though the offer was declined, we cannot doubt that the gesture helped to bring Mendizabal to reason.

Such is the manner in which Isabella was schooled to the risks of war, even from her infancy. Presumably it was because she was schooled to them so early that she faced them so fearlessly in after-life. Certainly she did face them with admirable nerve; and there were few intervals in her reign in which she was not within sight of them. Two revolutions, with a counter-revolution intervening, would not be an unreasonable description of the leading incidents of her stormy reign; while the years in which there were no actual revolutions were often marked by abortive revolutionary attempts. The detailed particulars may be read in *The Tragedy of Isabella II*: here we can only select one or two of the most illuminating scenes.

In the revolution of 1854 O'Donnell took the field in the country, and the streets of Madrid bristled with barricades on which, in the intervals of the rioting, the revolutionists

sat feasting and playing the guitar. Cristina's Palace was burnt in those alarming days, and Isabella's Palace was beleaguered. Cristina had taken refuge there, and the mob wanted to get hold of her and hang her from a lamp-post. Only the Palace Guard stood between her and that shocking fate; and it was not absolutely certain that the Palace Guard could be trusted. The mob howled for her blood, singing to the air of *La donna e mobile*:

Muera Cristina!
Muera la ladrona!

Which meant, "Death to Cristina! Death to the thief!" But neither Cristina nor her daughter showed any sign of fear. Espartero was sent for; and he promised to put the revolution down, on condition that Isabella would undertake, for the future, to live a moral life, and grant Spain a Liberal constitution. She gave the undertaking, though she thought morality the most tiresome of the virtues; and she bided her time, made friends with O'Donnell, intrigued with him against Espartero, and was rewarded with a counter-revolution, which restored her to absolute power, in 1856,—absolute power which lasted until the movement associated with the name of Prim.

That movement began with an abortive rising in 1866. The Madrid garrison revolted; and the sergeants led their men against their officers.

They were suppressed, after a good deal of bloodshed; and the inevitable series of military executions followed. If the story which is told be true, Isabella's temper, at that time, was like that of the tiger which has tasted blood. She sent a message to O'Donnell—or, at all events, a message purporting to come from her reached O'Donnell, to the effect that she desired all the prisoners, without exception, to be shot; that the establishment of their identity might be regarded as sufficient proof of their guilt. Whereto O'Donnell, who had lost some of his thirst for blood with the advancing years, retorted bitterly:

"Does not the lady understand that, if we were to shoot all the prisoners taken in arms against her, the blood would rise until it drowned her even in her boudoir? For my part, I shoot no one. There are competent tribunals to try offenders and condemn the guilty."

And he stalked out of her Palace, vowing that he would never set foot in it again so long as she was on the throne.

But she was not, as it happened, to remain on the throne a great deal longer. Previous revolutions had only been directed against her advisers; the revolution of 1868 was directed against herself. The programme of the revolutionists was to "pitch the throne out of window." So the storm broke at a time when Isabella, attended by her lover Marfori, the son

of an Italian cook, and once a strolling player, was enjoying herself at the pleasant seaside resort of San Sebastian. She was at a ball there when she heard the rumour—speedily confirmed—that Admiral Topete had "pronounced" at Cadiz, and that Captain-General Serrano—with whom, twenty years before, she had been in love—was marching on Madrid.

Once more she showed great courage in the hour of trial. Her first idea was to sail for Cadiz on a ship of war which was lying at anchor in the port; but the captain, whose sympathies were with Topete, set off for Cadiz without waiting for her. Then she proposed to make all haste to Madrid; but General Concha, who was commanding there on her behalf, sent a despatch exhorting her to stay where she was. He feared that, if she came, she would bring her lover with her, and that her lover's arrival would set Madrid itself ablaze. So she contented herself with sending telegrams, and waited until it was unsafe for her to wait any longer; and then, Serrano having defeated Novaliches at the Bridge of Alcolea, and entered Madrid in triumph, she took a special train for Biarritz, where Napoleon III and the Empress Eugénie welcomed her and did what they could to make her comfortable.

It was a sorry end, truly, to her experiences of the tented field, though she had no one but herself to blame for it; and we cannot conclude the chapter dealing with her adventures

better than by quoting a verse from the topical song with which her enemies pursued her into exile :

> Los reyes que salen a balazos
> Acaro volveran :
> Pero aquellos que salen a escobazos,
> Esos no volveran.

An expression of opinion that, though restoration was always possible for sovereigns defeated in civil wars, there was no prospect of return for those who fled ignominiously, as if beaten out with broom-sticks.

CHAPTER XXVI

Women in war in India—Cawnpore—Details of the siege and the massacre.

ENGLAND has been so seldom and so ineffectively invaded that Englishwomen have probably seen less of war than the women of any other European nation. In civil strife wives have, now and again, held castles for absent husbands; and there is, of course, the story of the women of Fishguard, whose red shawls caused the French raiding party to mistake them for militia-men, and so expedited their capitulation. But Englishwomen at home have never had to respond to the same call upon their courage as the French during the Hundred Years' War, or the Spaniards during the Peninsular War, or the Dutch during the struggle which gained them their independence. Those of them who have shared men's dangers have been those who have crossed the seas with their husbands, and helped, in the ways in which women can help, in the building of the Empire.

Abroad—and notably in India—they have had, if not to fight, at least to endure, and to look imminent death again and again in the eyes. Most notably in the year of the Mutiny,

perhaps, but also on many occasions before and after that terrible time, they have been called upon to give their proofs, and have given them. Women, it will be remembered, were among those who endured the horrors of the Black Hole at Calcutta; women were surrendered as hostages in that first Afghan War which resulted in the destruction of an entire British army in the Khyber Pass; to comparatively recent times belongs the story of Mrs. Grimwood's flight from the massacre at Manipur. Where the material is sufficient to fill an encyclopædia, one can only select a few typical scenes for presentation. The scene at Cawnpore will serve.

Sir George Trevelyan's is perhaps the most graphic of the narratives of it : he strikes with graphic power the note of contrast between the lives lived by the women involved in it before and after the day of the revolt :

"These women had spent their girlhood in the pleasant watering-places and country homes of our island, surrounded by all of English comfort and refinement that Eastern wealth could buy. Their later years had slipped away amidst the secure plenty and languid ease of a European household in India. In spacious saloons, alive with swinging punkahs; where closed and darkened windows excluded the heated atmosphere, and produced a counterfeit night, while through a mass of wetted grass

poured a stream of artificial air ; with piles of ice, and troops of servants, and the magazines of the preceding month, and the sensation novels of the preceding season, monotonous but not ungrateful, the even days flew by."

And then came the change, brought about almost in the twinkling of an eye. A thousand souls, of whom only 465 were men, were herded together in a small enclosure, and bombarded there by night and day. The women were placed there in plenty of time ; but the men followed them at the last moment, and in a hurry :

" There was no time for packing, or even for selection. There was not leisure to snatch a parting cup of coffee, or a handful of cigars, or an armful of favourite books, or a pith helmet that had been tested by many a long day's tiger-shooting under the blazing Indian sun. . . . Few and happy were they who had secured a single change of raiment. . . . Half-clad, unbreakfasted, confused and breathless, our countrymen huddled like shipwrecked sea-farers into the precincts of the fatal earthwork, which they entered only to suffer, and left only to die."

They had hardly occupied their improvised citadel, and arranged for its defence, than the attack began—the concentrated fire of

thousands of muskets and a score of heavy cannon:

"At first every projectile which struck the barracks was the signal for heartrending shrieks, and low wailing more heartrending yet; but, ere long, time and habit taught them to suffer and to fear in silence. Before the third evening every window and door had been beaten in. Next went the screens, the piled-up furniture, and the internal partitions; and soon shell and ball ranged at will through and through the naked rooms. Some ladies were slain outright by grape or round-shot. Others were struck down by bullets. Many were crushed beneath falling brick-work, or mutilated by the splinters which flew from shattered sash and panel."

And, of course, the peril of the bombardment was only one among many horrors:

"Accustomed to those frequent ablutions which, in England at least a duty, are in India a necessity, they had not a single spongeful of water for washing from the commencement to the close of the siege. They who, from childhood upwards, in the comprehensive and pretty phrase which ladies love, 'had had everything nice about them,' were now herded together in fetid misery, where delicacy and modesty were hourly shocked, though never for a moment impaired. Unshod, unkempt, ragged and squalid, haggard and emaciated,

parched with drought and faint with hunger, they sat waiting to hear that they were widows. Each morning deepened the shadow in the youngest cheek, and added a new furrow to the fairest brow. Want, exposure, and depression speedily decimated that hapless company. In these regions, a hideous train of diseases stand always within call: fever and apoplexy, and the fell scourge of cholera and dysentery, plague, more ghastly still. . . .

". . . Woe was it in those days unto them that were with child. There were infants born during the terrible three weeks; infants who had no future. There were women who underwent more than all the anguish of maternity, with less than none of the hope and joy. . . . An *ayah*, while dandling an infant, lost both her legs by the blow of a cannon-ball. That was in truth a dismal nursery."

So that horrors accumulated on horror's head. We will not dwell upon the painful details, but will finish the story of the siege with two scenes in which two women appear —one the wife of an officer, and the other the wife of a private, and both acquitting themselves courageously and cheerfully:

"During one of the earliest of the sorties, eleven mutineers were captured, and brought into the entrenchment. As no sentry could just then be spared from the front, they were placed under the charge of Bridget Widdowson,

a stalwart dame, wife of a private of the 32nd Regiment. Secured by the very insufficient contrivance of a single rope, passed from wrist to wrist, they sat quietly on the ground like good children, while the matron walked up and down in front of the row, drawn sword in hand."

The officer's wife was Mrs. Moore, whose husband, Captain Moore, was the soul of the defence—an Irishman who fought in high spirits as well as bravely:

"When the vicissitudes of battle called her husband to the outposts, Mrs. Moore would step across with her work, and spend the day beneath a little hut of bamboos covered with canvas, which the garrison of Barrack No. 2 had raised for her in their most sheltered corner. Seldom had fair lady a less appropriate bower."

So the days passed until, at the end of three weeks, Nana Sahib's offer of a safe-conduct to Allahabad was accepted; and the story of the Nana's treachery, culminating in the Cawnpore massacre, is too well known to every one to be repeated in detail here. The refugees were put on boats, and then the boats were fired on, and the few who were not killed and had not the rare luck to escape were brought back as prisoners. Most of the men were killed forthwith; the women, with only a very few men among them, were placed in a humble dwelling, since known in India as the House

of the Ladies and in England as the House of the Massacre:

"It comprised two principal rooms, each twenty feet by ten, certain windowless closets intended for the use of native domestics, and an open court some fifteen feet square. Here, during a fortnight of the eastern summer, were penned 206 persons of European extraction, for the most part women and children of gentle birth. The grown men were but five in number. . . . They had neither furniture, bedding, nor straw; nothing but coarse and hard bamboo matting, unless they preferred a smoother couch upon the bare floor. They fed sparely on cakes of unleavened dough, and lentil-porridge dished up in earthen pans without spoon or plate. There was some talk of meat on Sundays, but it never came to anything. . . . The matron of these female prisoners, whom it took so little to keep in order was . . . a waiting-maid of the courtesan who then ruled the circle of the Nana. The Begum daily took across two ladies to the Nana's stables, where they were set down to grind corn at a handmill for the space of several hours. . . .

"Hardship, heat, wounds, and want of space and proper nourishment released many from their bondage before the season marked out by Azimoolah for a jail delivery such as the world had seldom witnessed. Within eight days there succumbed to cholera and dysen-

tery, eighteen women, seven children, and a Hindoo nurse. . . . Dying by threes and fours of frightful maladies, the designations of which they hardly knew; trying to eat nauseous and unwonted food, and to sleep upon a bed of boards; tormented by flies and mosquitoes, and dirt, and prickly heat, and all the lesser evils that aggravate and keep for ever fresh the consciousness of a great misfortune; doing for the murderer of their dearest ones that labour which in Asia has always been the distinctive sign and badge of slavery; to such reality of woe had been reduced those beings for whom nothing had formerly been too dainty and well-appointed; whose idea of peril had once been derived from romances; and who had been acquainted with destitution only through tracts and the reports of charitable institutions."

They were "hostages"; and there was a danger that they would die so fast that the Nana would have no hostages left in the hour of need. Fearing that result, he caused them to be driven twice a day into the verandah, there to inhale enough fresh air to keep them alive, while idlers stood about and stared at them. Meanwhile, the reinforcements from England were coming, ignorant, save for rumour, of the exact conditions prevailing at Cawnpore, but fighting their way to the deliverance of the captives. They had won

battles, and were close at hand, when the Nana decided that, instead of using his prisoners as an asset in a bargain, he would have them killed.

It was a decision to which, one is glad to know, the ladies of his own household opposed such resistance as they could. If he murdered women, they said, they would throw themselves and their children out of the upper windows. To show that they meant what they said, they began what we now call a "hunger-strike"; but the only result of the protest was to expedite the execution of the order. Many of the sepoys shrank from the task; but willing murderers were found—some of them butchers by trade. They drew their swords and entered; and then—too late—Havelock fought his way into the town, and Nana Sahib fled into the wilderness, and covered up his tracks so effectively that no one, to this day, knows for certain what became of him, or what sort of an end he made.

CHAPTER XXVII

The First Afghan War—The retreat through the Khyber Pass—The massacre—Extracts from Lady Sale's Diary.

IT is agreed that the first Afghan War was a blunder, alike in conception and in execution; but this is not the place in which to review the political miscalculations which inspired it. Enough that we undertook, for insufficient reasons, to set Shah Soojah on the throne occupied by Dost Mahomed, and that disaster was, from the first, predicted by those best qualified to judge. Marquis Wellesley wrote of "this wild expedition into a distant region of rocks and deserts, of sands and ice and snow." Mr. Elphinstone, who knew Afghanistan well, predicted that "if an army was sent up the passes, and if we could feed it, no doubt we might take Cabul and set up Shah Soojah; but it was hopeless to maintain him in a poor, cold, strong and remote country, among so turbulent a people."

Nevertheless an army was assembled and despatched, and Shah Soojah was escorted into Cabul on August 6, 1839; and it was clearly

seen that, if his throat was not to be cut by his subjects, the expeditionary force must remain as an army of occupation. Consequently, to quote Archibald Forbes's *History of the War*:

"The officers sent for their wives to inhabit with them the bungalows in which they had settled down. Lady Macnaghten, in the spacious mission residence which stood apart in its own grounds, presided over the society of the cantonments, which had all the cheery surroundings of the half-settled, half-nomadic life of our military people in the East. There were the 'coffee house' after the morning ride, the gathering round the band-stand in the evening, the impromptu dance, and the *burra khana* occasionally in the larger houses. A race-course had been laid out, and there were 'sky' races and more formal meetings. And so 'as in the days that were before the Flood, they were eating and drinking and marrying and giving in marriage, and knew not until the flood came, and took them all away.'"

But the government, as Archibald Forbes also writes, "was a government of sentry-boxes," and Afghanistan was "not governed so much as garrisoned." The line of communications was long, and was interrupted from time to time in the summer of 1840; and Sir William Macnaghten, the British Envoy

to the Court of Shah Soojah, became "mournfully conscious that the capital and the surrounding country were ripe for a rising." General Nott, a level-headed but peppery Anglo-Indian officer of the old school, who hated "politicals," wrote vigorously from Candahar :

"The conduct of the thousand and one politicals has ruined our cause, and bared the throat of every European in this country to the sword and knife of the revengeful Afghan and bloody Belooch ; and, unless several regiments be quickly sent, not a man will be left to describe the fate of his comrades."

He wrote in a burst of temper, and probably without surmising how true a prophet he was to be. Military, as well as political incapacity, was needed to make the catastrophe complete ; both were to be forthcoming in abundance. One dangerous step was the cutting down of subsidies paid to Afghan chiefs as bribes for good behaviour—a measure for which the Ghilzais avenged themselves by quitting Cabul, occupying the passes between Cabul and Jellalabad, and intercepting the communications with India by the Khyber route. Sir Robert Sale had to fight his way to Jellalabad in order to clear the passes ; but still the people at Cabul did not understand that very much was the matter, though they were annoyed by the temporary interruption

of the postal service. Lady Sale was about to leave for India, accompanied by the Macnaghtens and General Elphinstone, and—to quote Forbes again :

"Her Diary expresses an undertone of regret at having to leave the snug house in the cantonments which Sale had built on his own plan, the excellent kitchen garden in which her warrior husband, in the intervals of his soldiering duties, grew fine crops of peas, potatoes, cauliflowers, and artichokes, and the parterres of flowers which she herself cultivated, and which were the admiration of the Afghan gentlemen who came to pay their morning calls."

The entry thus summarised is dated October 31 ; and the rising began on November 2. In consequence of that rising, in which Sir Alexander Burnes lost his life, it was decided to send for Sale, who decided, for sufficient military reasons, not to come, and to ask for a reinforcement from Candahar—a reinforcement which could not be sent, owing to the severity of the weather. Such fighting as occurred resulted disastrously. The troops had to be concentrated in the cantonments, and terms had to be made.

Whether it was wise, or soldier-like, to accept the terms offered is a question which we have to leave. Certainly nothing worse than befell the party could have befallen them, if they

had defied the Afghans to do their worst, and held out to the last extremity; and it was also certain at the time that the Afghan chiefs could not control their men, and that no engagement into which they might enter was worth the paper on which it was written. Still, rightly or wrongly, it was decided to submit: to hand over all small-arms and ordnance stores as "a token of friendship" to the Afghans, and to agree to march back to India, at the height of a cruelly cold winter, trusting to the promise of the chiefs to supply them with provisions and protect them.

The 4,500 armed men—690 of them Europeans—might reasonably have expected, if unencumbered, to cut their way through all the Afghans in Afghanistan; but encumbrances are the curse of Indian armies. With this army there were no fewer than 12,000 camp-followers, together with many invalids, many women, and many children; and the temperature was well below zero, and the snow more than a foot deep. It took the host two hours and a half to march the first mile; and, as the army evacuated the cantonments, the Afghans poured into them, and fired on the rear-guard. So the disorder began at once. As Lady Sale writes:

"The servants who were not concerned in the plunder all threw away their loads, and ran off. Private baggage, commissariat, and

ammunition were nearly annihilated at one fell swoop. The whole road was covered with men, women, and children lying down in the snow to die. The only baggage we saved was Mrs. Sturt's bedding, on which the *ayah* rode."

Altogether—the whole country being "a swamp encrusted with ice"—only six miles were covered in the course of the first day; and the halt for the night was made in great discomfort:

"There were no tents save two or three small palls that arrived. All scraped away the snow as best they might, to make a place to lie down on. The evening and night were intensely cold: no food for man or beast procurable. . . . Captain Johnson, in our great distress, kindly pitched a small pall over us: but it was dark, and we had few pegs; the wind blew in under the sides and I felt myself gradually stiffening. I left the bedding, which was occupied by Mrs. Sturt and her husband, and doubled up my legs in a straw chair of Johnson's."

And Lady Sale remembered how, while her party had been considering whether they could save any of their books, she had opened one of the volumes, in a manner reminiscent of the old *Sortes Virgilianæ*, and lighted upon these ominous lines:

> Few, few shall part where many meet,
> The snow shall be their winding-sheet;
> And every turf beneath their feet
> Shall be a soldier's sepulchre.

"Heaven forbid," she comments, "that our fears should be realised! but we have commenced our retreat so badly that we may reasonably have our doubts regarding the *finale*." Doubts strengthened when "at daybreak we found several men frozen to death," and when the officers of the rear-guard reported that the road was strewn with abandoned baggage, and that "numbers of men, women, and children are left on the roadside to die." And worse was to follow, and that quickly. Already the Afghans, in defiance of the undertaking of their chiefs, were beginning to hover threateningly on the flanks of the retreating army; already it was necessary to spike and abandon guns, while fatigue parties sent to draw water were fired on; and, at one point, the Afghan horsemen charged and "succeeded in carrying off an immense quantity of baggage and a number of camels, without experiencing the least resistance."

So January 7 passed; and the dawn of January 8 found "nearly every man paralysed with cold, so as to be scarcely able to hold his musket or move." They broached casks of spirits, and drank too freely of their contents:

"For myself," writes Lady Sale, "whilst I sat for hours on my horse in the cold, I felt very grateful for a tumbler of sherry, which at any other time would have made me very

unladylike, but now merely warmed me, and appeared to have no more strength in it than water. Cups full of sherry were given to young children three and four years old without in the least affecting their heads."

Then the march was resumed ; and the ladies, as well as the soldiers, quickly found themselves under fire :

"The pony Mrs. Sturt rode was wounded in the ear and neck. I fortunately had only *one* ball *in* my arm ; three others passed through my poshteen near the shoulder without doing me any injury. The party that fired on us were not more than fifty yards from us, and we owed our escape to urging our horses on as fast as they could go over a road where, at any other time, we should have walked our horses very carefully."

There were other women who lost their horses—women, some of them, with little children in their charge. Often they were cut down, or carried off ; but a few reached camp safely. Lady Sale tells us how Mrs. Mainwaring "preserved her child through these dreadful scenes" :

"She not only had to walk a considerable distance with her child in her arms through the deep snow, but had also to pick her way over the bodies of the dead, dying, and wounded, both men and cattle, and constantly to cross

the streams of water, wet up to the knees, pushed and shoved about by men and animals, the enemy keeping up a sharp fire, and several persons being killed close to her. She, however, got safe to camp with her child, but had no opportunity to change her clothes."

And the camp was a poor place of refuge. Already 500 regulars and about 2,500 camp-followers had been killed :

" To sleep in such anxiety of mind and intense cold was impossible. There were nearly thirty of us packed together without room to turn. The Sipahees and camp-followers, half frozen, tried to force their way, not only into the tent, but actually into our beds, if such resting-places could be so called—a poshteen (or pelisse of sheep-skin) half spread on the snow, and the other half wrapped over one. Many poor wretches died round the tent in the night."

Nor had those who survived the night many more days to live. It is a matter of history that Dr. Brydon ultimately struggled into Jellalabad,—the sole survivor of the army. Most of them were caught in a trap,—detained in a narrow gorge by an abattis of prickly brush-wood, and there massacred by the Ghilzais. Twenty officers and forty-five European soldiers made the last stand near Gundamuk ; and six reached Futtehebad. Of the four who left

Futtehebad, three were cut down before Jellalabad was reached. The one who attained that goal was wounded and ready to drop. The others, to whom we owe the tale of the sufferings, were a few ladies, and a few officers, whom Akbar Khan accepted as prisoners, promising them safe conduct and good treatment, before the final attack.

Lady Sale was one of those thus entrusted to the doubtful mercies of the enemy:

"Overwhelmed with domestic affliction," she writes, "neither Mrs. Sturt nor I were in a fit state to decide for ourselves whether we would accept the Sirdar's protection or not. . . . All I personally know of the affair is that I was told we were all to go, and that our horses were ready, and we must mount immediately and be off. . . . We were taken by a very circuitous route to the Khoord Cabul forts, where we found Mahommed Akbar Khan and the hostages. . . . Three rooms were cleared out for us, having no outlets except a small door to each; and, of course, they were dark and dirty. . . . The dimensions of our room are, at the utmost, fourteen feet by ten. At midnight some mutton bones and greasy rice were brought to us. All that Mrs. Sturt and I possess are the clothes on our backs in which we quitted Cabul."

From early in January until September was well advanced the party was destined to continue in captivity; and we have detailed

accounts of their detention, not only from Lady Sale, but also from Colin Mackenzie and Vincent Eyre. It is difficult to say by what standard the treatment meted out to them ought to be judged; for the resources of their jailers were not abundant, and there was Afghan public opinion to be considered. There was, at any rate, no breach of faith, such as had been feared, and Archibald Forbes finds "kindness and a certain rude chivalry" in Akbar Khan's behaviour. He was a chief who seems to have had some of the instincts of a gentleman, though not all of them. He allowed his prisoners to correspond with their friends; he allowed them to borrow money from Cabul usurers, and to receive presents of books and other comforts; but the accommodation which he provided for them—in the early months of their captivity, at all events,—was squalid. We may borrow Archibald Forbes's summary of the conditions in which they had to live:

"For the whole party, there were but five rooms, each of which was occupied by from five to ten officers and ladies, the few soldiers and non-commissioned officers, who were mostly wounded, being quartered in sheds and cellars. Mackenzie drily remarks that the hardships of the common lot, and the close intimacy of prison life, brought into full relief good and evil qualities; 'conventional polish was a good deal rubbed off and replaced by a plainness

of speech quite unheard of in good society.' Ladies and gentlemen were necessitated to occupy the same room during the night, but the men 'cleared out' early in the morning, leaving the ladies to themselves. The dirt and vermin of their habitation were abominably offensive to people to whom scrupulous cleanliness was a second nature. . . . They had a few packs of playing-cards; they made for themselves back-gammon and draught-boards, and when in good spirits they sometimes played hopscotch and blindman's buff with the children of the party. The Sundays were always kept scrupulously, Lawrence and Mackenzie conducting the service in turn."

So the time passed. At the end of three months or so, the prisoners were removed and maintained in greater luxury; but even then there was talk of carrying them away over the Hindu Khush into a captivity which perhaps might never end. There was also quite a chance that they would be killed. As late as July 31 we find Lady Sale writing:

"What will now be our fate seems very uncertain; but I still think he will not cut our throats—not out of love to us, but because the other chiefs would resent it; as, having possession of us, they could at least obtain a handsome sum as our ransom."

As a matter of fact, a message came to

their custodian from General Pollock, offering him 20,000 rupees and a life-pension of 12,000 rupees for their release. As there was some doubt about the authenticity or *bona fides* of that offer, the prisoners themselves signed an undertaking to provide the money from their personal resources if it were not forthcoming from the Government. Then they were set free, and occupied a fort, and gathered provisions together, so that they might stand a short siege, if necessary, while waiting for Sir Robert Sale's cavalry. It was at this penultimate stage of the adventure that Lady Sale herself offered to carry a gun.

A few weapons were brought in, and Captain Lawrence proposed to deal them out. "Now, my lads," he said, "here's Saleh Mahommed Khan has brought arms and ammunition for some of you: who volunteers to take muskets?"

"I blush to record," writes Lady Sale, "that a dead silence ensued. Thinking the men might be shamed into doing their duty, I said to Lawrence, 'You had better give *me* one, and I will lead the party'; but there was still no offer: and he told our general that it was useless; and he had better take them on. It is sad to think the men were so lost to all right feeling."

Fortunately, however, the rescue party was so near at hand that their reluctance did not matter. Sir Richmond Shakespeare rode in

with 600 Kuzzilbash horsemen; and Sale was not far behind him. One may conclude the chapter with Lady Sale's account of the happy ending of her perilous adventures:

"It is impossible to express our feelings on Sale's approach. To my daughter and myself, happiness, so long delayed as to be almost unexpected, was actually painful, and accompanied by a choking sensation which could not obtain the relief of tears. When we arrived where the infantry were posted, they cheered all the captives as they passed them; and the men of the 13th pressed forward to welcome us individually. Most of the men had a word of hearty congratulation to offer, each in his own style, on the restoration of his colonel's wife and daughter: and then my highly wrought feelings found the desired relief; and I could scarcely speak to thank the soldiers for their sympathy, whilst the long-deferred tears now found their course."

CHAPTER XXVIII

Woman as pacificist—Baroness von Suttner as controversialist and novelist—The value of *Die Waffen nieder!*

THOUGH this book was finished some time before the peace was broken, and is now being revised in the midst of the war, there has been no deletion of any story relating valiant deeds performed by women of the Teutonic races. The question of eliminating such stories did not arise, because the author failed to discover any in his manuscript; and their absence from his manuscript, not being the result of conscious prejudice, presumably arises out of the nature of things. He might, of course, have included in his gallery the Empress Maria Theresa, from whom Frederick the Great stole Silesia, with as little ceremony as a pick-pocket snatching a purse, and Queen Louisa of Prussia, whose attitude during the years of servitude to Napoleon was more dignified than that of her husband; but the scope of the volume would have had to be somewhat enlarged to admit them. They were not exactly Warrior Queens, though the wars waged in their times had a very direct effect upon their fortunes; and when one searches for such heroines as the

book was designed to deal with, one finds German annals singularly barren.

And that is as one would have expected : for two reasons. The Germans, like their ancestors the Goths and their prototypes the Huns, have always owed the most notable achievements of their history to the organised efforts of the mass rather than to the dash and daring of the individual; and they have always been heavy-footed in their endeavours to confine even exceptional women to the domestic sphere of usefulness. That women of unique ability and force of character have been born in Germany, as well as elsewhere, is, of course, hardly to be doubted; but fewer paths to glory have been open to them. In so far as they have shone at all in relation to war, they have done so by sounding the anti-militarist note. Woman the Anti-Militarist is the chief contribution of the German world to our subject; and for that fact also there is a reason.

That reason is not that war has brought more suffering to the women of Germany than to the women of other countries. On the whole, they have suffered, not more, but less than other women, for their enemies have nearly always been more chivalrous than their protectors. But the German theory of war, as expounded by the teachers of the people, has, in the main, been different—more brutal and material—than the theory of the enemies of Germany. Among the Germans alone of the peoples sup-

posed to be civilised, has war been proclaimed "an instrument of policy"—a means, that is to say, not of defending the soil and the national honour, but of gratifying unscrupulous ambitions at the expense of the weak.

That was the Gospel according to Clausewitz, and that is the Gospel according to Bernhardi. To see it practically applied in the past, we have to follow the career of Bismarck, who deliberately picked two quarrels and brought about two wars in order to establish Prussian hegemony in Germany, and then provoked a third war in order to establish German hegemony in Europe. Wars of that sort may be popular as long as they are successful. Philosophers, and even divines, may be found to justify them as necessary steps in the great march of civilisation; for the prosperous seldom pause to examine their ideals too closely. But the fact remains that the ideals behind the wars which are waged as "instruments of policy" will not bear examination; and at the hour of distress, whether national or individual, the thoughtful are apt to reconsider them, and to hear the whispering of the still small voice.

To what extent the women of Germany have heard the voice and attended to it during the present war we shall not know for certain until the extinguisher has descended on the Censor, and the Press is once more free; but one already knows enough to remark certain differences between their attitude and that of

the women of the countries which Germany has attacked. In the view of the latter, the war, though terrible, is nevertheless worth while, because of the great issues involved in it. In the view of the latter, the war ceased to be worth while when it began to be terrible, and was never regarded as worth while by those who foresaw that it was going to be terrible. The writer is one of those whom the war caught behind the enemy's lines; he speaks, in this matter, of what he saw and heard.

On the whole, the women of the officer caste were true to the traditions of their caste, taking the tone of the Spartan mothers who bade their sons return "with their shields or upon them"; and there were also a good many women of the commercial classes to whom the war appeared in the light of a good stroke of business. They spoke of the imminent expansion of Germany with the same airy satisfaction with which they might have announced their intention of moving into larger houses because their husbands had been unexpectedly successful in their speculations. But there were also women who, from the very first, saw the horrors of war, and saw practically nothing else. According to them, Germany was engaged in a vulgar, unprofitable, and bloody quarrel, provoked by the turbulent Crown Prince, a person whose private character was that of an unconscionable reprobate. The writer heard a German mother unbosom

herself to that effect in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg.

"I can say here," she said, "what I should not dare to say in Germany. It is a scandal and a shame that German mothers should be called upon to sacrifice their sons to the miserable ambitions of that abandoned wretch."

Such speeches were doubtless rare in those days; but they were to be heard even before the disastrous check on the Marne, and they have, since then, become much louder and more frequent. Whereas the women of France have suffered in dignified silence, the women of Germany have suffered noisily, and with obstreperous protests; and the explanation of the difference in their attitude is obvious. In the one case the cause is perceived to be worth the sacrifice, and, in the other case, it is felt not to be worth it. Germany went to war, not to defend the national honour, which nobody was attacking, but in order to filch territory under the name of guarantees and steal money on pretence of requiring "compensations." The consequence was that, when the material advantages were seen not to be forthcoming, the martial enthusiasm of the women evaporated in indignation at the enhanced price of butter.

That, at all events, is a part of the picture: the side of it which shows us the instinctive

pacificism of the unreflecting. There is also a Higher Pacificism in the country : a pacificism which looks for a philosophical justification of its principles, and sees nothing in war, as war is understood in Germany, which warrants the bloodshed and the privations. Rosa Luxemburg, the Social Democrat, took that line at the beginning of the war, and was promptly locked up for doing so ; but, though her voice was thereby silenced, her ideas were not extinguished. The note which she struck recurred in a controversy conducted, many months afterwards, in the columns of the *Berliner Tageblatt* between Fräulein Dr. Kate Schirmacher, and Frau Ellen Passche.

The former lady is the chief of the German champions of woman's claim to the vote. She tries to take a man's view of things, and has proposed that all the able-bodied women of Germany should be enrolled in the Landwehr. She is not only in favour of the war, but has committed herself to the opinion that the longer the war lasts the better :

"We Germans," she writes, "needed to break with a number of bad habits which we had fallen into through our comfort and our enjoyment of life. A long war will accomplish that result for us more thoroughly than a short one. . . . It is a lasting gain for the unity of our people that south and east and west and north should have to join in defending that

unity with their blood. Only a long war can thus educate and intensify our sentiments."

It is a poor idea, though Bernhardi would doubtless agree with it: that killing is a part of education. But it is not wide-spread among the women of Germany at the present hour. Frau Ellen Passche most emphatically would not have it so.

"How is it possible," she asks, "that a woman can have so hard a heart? How is it possible that a woman can tell us that we are living so comfortably that only a prolongation of the war can save us?

"Can it be," she continues, "that Fräulein Dr. Kate Schirmacher has lost in the war no relative, no lover, no friend for whom she weeps? If so, let her thank God; but let her also turn her eyes to the future:

"You wives who have given your dearest; you mothers who have lost your only sons, or all your sons; you sisters who will never again see a loyal brother standing by your sides, think of the future! Are we young women who have bright young children playing around us to sacrifice them too in twenty years' time? It must not be. . . . Or are women to bear children merely as food for powder? That also is hard to admit. German women must now bear many children to fill up the gaps that have been made; but not for war—no, for an eternal and blessed peace. And so I say—No

half-heartedness! Think of all that you may have to lose in twenty years' time . . . and you who have nothing more to lose because the war has taken everything from you, think of us, and help us younger women, that we may be spared such tears and lamentations in the years to come."

Of a truth it was a very womanly woman who wrote thus; but no one will draw the foolish conclusion that, because English, French, Belgian, and Russian women are not writing thus, we must therefore class them as less womanly. War, for them, is an odious necessity, thrust upon them as the only means whereby oppression can be resisted; and, in the atmosphere which such a war engenders, there is no room for pacificism—no room for any feeling except the stern resolution to endure until the end. For the Germans, on the other hand, war is, as has just been said, an instrument of policy, a trick in the great game of grab. Out of war so conceived there arises no sentiment strong enough to shame the pacificists to silence. Such war, rather, creates the atmosphere in which pacificism flourishes and commands sympathy; and that is why it seems the most natural thing in the world that the most famous of the women pacificists—Baroness von Suttner, the author of *Die Waffen nieder!*—should have been an Austrian.

Die Waffen nieder! is, of course, a novel with

a purpose. It is a commonplace of criticism to pronounce that novels with purposes are generally bad, and the anti-militarist purpose is, no doubt, here obtruded with a persistence which all the canons of criticism condemn; but it is precisely this obtrusion of purpose which gives the book its reality, and its æsthetic, as well as its moral, significance. The trick which produces these effects may or may not have been deliberately adopted: a critic, at all events, can have no difficulty in laying his finger on the trick, and showing how what, in another novel, might have been flaws, are here contributory to the prevailing impression of truth.

What the novel seems to lack, if judged from the conventional standpoint, is characterisation. The narrator never seems to be inside her characters, or even to have observed them more than superficially: the temptation is therefore strong to scoff at them as "wooden." But that temptation is a pitfall into which one must not stumble. *Die Waffen nieder!* is not presented to us as a study either of manners or of psychology. It is presented as the autobiographical lamentation of a woman—beautiful, nobly born, well-educated, but not otherwise exceptionally endowed—the daughter, sister, and wife of Austrian officers—whom the circumstances of her life brought into tragic contact with the principal continental wars of her time: the Italian War of 1859; the Danish War of 1864; the Austro-Prussian War

of 1866; and, finally, the Franco-German War of 1870–71.

She lives, as it were, in the constant shadow of the sword. All the talk in the circles in which she moves is of the glory of war, and of the superiority of the career of arms to the debased pursuits of the civilians. But the glory, as so often happens in Austrian wars, is only forthcoming in a scanty measure; and every clash of arms involves some tragedy for herself and those dear to her. So, under the stress of successive calamities, she thinks things out: observes how much suffering is invited for the attainment of quite trivial ends; how irrational is the invocation of the God of Battles by each of two contending armies; how fatal is the interest in war to the progress of art, science, and industry. She also sees the horrors at close quarters, and relates what she has seen.

Characterisation, it is quite obvious, would have been out of place in such a novel as that. A woman writing under the obsession of such catastrophes could not be expected to describe her husband, her lover, and the members of her family with the minute particularity of Dickens, or to analyse their motives with the cold-blooded cunning of Flaubert. She would naturally take them for granted, and expect those to whom she told her story to take them for granted too; any more careful method of relation would have been unreal and uncon-

vincing. Enough that she loved, or did not love; sympathised, or did not sympathise. Any minuter personal detail would be lost in the magnitude of the tragedy: the only details dwelt upon would be those which the tragedy of war brought home to her—a tragedy which would surely be avoided if those responsible for it realised all that it meant.

Just because she does not make a plain woman write like a woman of letters, or a woman who has suffered write like a detached observer, always on the look out for flashes of humour or soul-revealing traits, the Baroness von Suttner has produced a book which rings true as a whole, whatever hypercriticism may find wanting on this page or that. She omits the detail which the brain would have failed to remark because the heart was full; but she does not shrink from detail, though it be gruesome, when it is pertinent to her purpose. The description of the visit paid to Sadowa after the great battle is one of the most graphic and poignant scenes in modern literature. It is on that, not on her formal contributions to controversy, that the Baroness von Suttner's fame as an apostle of peace must rest; and it will rest upon it quite securely.

CHAPTER XXIX

Florence Nightingale—How she prepared herself for her life's work, and how she performed it—Her courage—Her thoroughness—Her modesty—Her supreme title to immortal fame.

WE come, in conclusion, to the one name which is worthy to be set beside that of Jeanne d'Arc—equally glorious, though for other reasons: the name of Florence Nightingale. She is better remembered, and worthier to be remembered, than any of the generals in any of the allied armies, as the men of war themselves agreed at a certain dinner of Crimean veterans. It was agreed that each guest at the banquet should write on a slip of paper the name of the person whose services during the campaign were likely most to impress posterity; and when the papers were examined, the name of Florence Nightingale was found inscribed on every one of them. The only other great reputation made by the war was that of Todleben; and Florence Nightingale's reputation stands the higher of the two.

A good many enthusiasts probably think of her as a happy accident: a woman of genius who achieved wonders through inspiration, willing self-sacrifice, and intuitive womanly

sympathy. Genius, assuredly, is a word which one need not be afraid of using when one speaks of her; but even more remarkable than her genius is the thoroughness with which she prepared herself for her life's work, for all the world as though she foresaw the call, and was resolved to be ready to answer it. When the war broke out, the War Office was not ready, and the soldiers were not ready, but had to pick up their business as they went along. Florence Nightingale alone impresses one as knowing exactly what to do and how to do it —a professional among amateurs.

There was no need for her to work; and one can hardly speak of her as belonging to a profession, for she practically created the profession which she adorned. She grew up in a class of society in which the majority of women go through life avoiding work as carefully as a cat avoids puddles. The general view of her period was that that was what a woman's attitude to work ought to be. Work, it was held, was for man, and for women of the lower orders. A lady who worked sank in the social scale of values—much as a baronet would do if he opened a small shop, or practised a manual trade. But Florence Nightingale did not care about that. She had a strong will, and she was socially sure of herself. It did not matter that precedents were lacking—she could afford to make one.

Illnesses in her own family which she was

called upon to nurse gave her her first interest in nursing. She thus realised that nursing was a serious business, calling for experience and exact knowledge as well as sympathy with suffering, and the desire to relieve it. She was moved to study the subject; and her endeavour to study it in the London, Edinburgh, and Dublin hospitals made it clear to her that nursing was, in England, a neglected, and almost a non-existent art: that the only nurses worthy of the name were the Roman Catholic Sisters of Charity. Then she heard of Pastor Fliedner of Kaiserswerth, and his Order of Deaconesses. She went to Kaiserswerth, studied under Pastor Fliedner, and learnt all that he could teach her. She also visited the Sisters of St. Vincent de Paul in Paris; and, for some time after her return to England, she took charge of the Harley Street Home for Sick Governesses. That is how it was that she was really ready when her hour came—an hour announced by the appeal in one of Sir William Howard Russell's letters to the *Times*:

"Are there no devoted women among us, able and willing to go forth to minister to the sick and wounded soldiers of the East in the hospitals at Scutari? Are none of the daughters of England, at this extreme hour of need, ready for such a work of mercy? . . . France has sent forth her Sisters of Mercy unsparingly,

and they are even now by the bedsides of the wounded and the dying, giving what woman's hand alone can give of comfort and relief. . . . Must we fall so far below the French in self-sacrifice and devotedness, in a work which Christ so signally blesses as done unto Himself ? "

Of course, the appeal did not fall upon deaf ears : the trouble was that it fell mainly upon the ears of the incompetent. The War Office was inundated with offers of service—mostly from unsuitable persons. It was almost impossible to pick out the few who were suitable from so vast a multitude ; and the authorities were adverse to the experiment, fearing that the confusion of the hospitals would be worse confounded by what a later Commander-in-Chief scornfully styled " the plague of women." A statement to that effect was issued from the War Office :

" Many ladies," declared Sidney Herbert, " whose generous enthusiasm prompts them to offer services as nurses are little aware of the hardships they would have to encounter, and the horrors they would have to witness. Were all accepted who offer, I fear we should have, not only many indifferent nurses, but many hysterical patients."

But that was not Sidney Herbert's last word. If he feared the plague of women, he also knew Florence Nightingale—personally as well as

by reputation. He was satisfied that she was the one woman in England who could, if she would, organise and execute, without delay, such a reform of hospital administration as circumstances urgently called for. He sat down and wrote to her, telling her of his difficulties:

"I receive numbers of offers from ladies to go out, but they are ladies who have no conception of what a hospital is, nor of the nature of its duties; and they would, when the time came, either recoil from the work or be entirely useless, and consequently, what is worse, entirely in the way. . . .

"There is but one person in England that I know of who would be capable of organising and superintending such a scheme, and have been several times on the point of asking you hypothetically if, supposing the attempt were made, you would undertake to direct it. . . .

"A number of sentimental enthusiastic ladies turned loose in the hospital at Scutari would probably, after a few days, be *mises à la porte* by those whose business they would interrupt, and whose authority they would dispute. My question simply is, Would you listen to the request to go out and supervise the whole thing? . . .

"I must not conceal from you that upon your decision will depend the ultimate success or failure of the plan. Your own personal qualities, your knowledge, and your power of administration, and, among greater things, your rank

and position in society, give you advantages in such a work which no other person possesses. . . .

"Shall I come to you between three and five? Will you let me have a line at the War Office, to let me know?"

It was not only a difficult task which Sidney Herbert thus besought Florence Nightingale to undertake, but also a dangerous one. The hospitals were hardly less perilous places than the trenches; fever and cholera were to work hardly less havoc than shot and shell; those who returned alive from the errand of mercy were almost certain to return in broken health. Both Sidney Herbert and Florence Nightingale knew all about that; but her acceptance of the responsible charge offered to her was never in doubt. While he was writing to ask for her help, she herself was writing to volunteer it: the two letters crossed in the post. And, as promptitude was of the essence of the commission, she had recruited her assistants and started within a week of receiving her appointment: cheered across France by that whole-hearted enthusiasm of which France has the secret; sped on her way by hotel-keepers who would present no bills, waiters who would take no tips, and porters and fisherwomen who scorned to be paid for carrying the baggage of thirty-nine persons from the steamer to the train.

A book would be needed to tell the story of the expedition ; a chapter at the end of a book cannot possibly tell it. For detail and anecdote the reader must go to Kinglake, or to the *Life of Florence Nightingale*, by Miss Sarah Tooley. What strikes one most emphatically in the narrative is not the courage and the devotion—for many women, happily, are courageous and devoted—but the amazing competence displayed in new and perplexing conditions. Florence Nightingale had learnt all that she could about nursing ; but no such experience as this had ever come in her way. The mark of genius lay in this : that she so evidently knew a great deal more than she had been taught. She was called upon, not merely to invent the art of hospital management, but to improvise it ; and she succeeded.

That is the reason why, though many women gave their services, and some gave their lives, to the same task, her name alone became supremely famous. The common impression of her, consecrated by poems and pictures, is of a ministering angel, moving silently about by night, and smoothing pillows :

> So in that house of misery
> A lady with a lamp I see
> Pass through the glimmering gloom,
> And flit from room to room.
>
> And slowly, as in a dream of bliss,
> The speechless sufferer turns to kiss
> Her shadow as it falls
> Upon the darkening walls.

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That is Longfellow's tribute from across the Atlantic; but it tells only a part of the truth, and does Florence Nightingale something less than justice. Sympathy, indeed, she showed in abundance, never sparing herself in response to any call; but the case was one in which sympathy without sense, and, above all, without authority, would have availed very little. Even when the presence of women has to be denounced as "a plague," there is generally something which can be called sympathy in the midst of them. They sympathise more with officers than with privates; but still, they sympathise. Florence Nightingale's strength lay in the fact that, born to command, she had trained herself to organise. One can imagine circumstances in which the complaint would have been heard that she was too fond of managing, interfering, and setting people to rights. Even at Scutari that complaint was occasionally heard, though the louder voice of enthusiasm drowned it.

At Scutari, however, there was needed, above all things, a woman who not only liked setting people to rights, but was capable of doing so, was not afraid of cutting red tape instead of waiting for it to be untied, and shouldering the responsibility for an opportune disobedience of orders. Florence Nightingale, it seems quite clear, assumed even more authority than the War Office gave her. She assumed it in virtue of her knowledge, and was able to exercise

it through her exceptional strength of character. It was not only to nurses and hospital orderlies that she gave instructions; surgeons and commissariat officers also found that they had to obey her. Medical stores had to be opened when she wanted them, whatever the regulations said to the contrary. Within her sphere, if not also a little outside it, the commands of the Lady-in-Chief came to be accepted as unquestioningly as those of the Commander-in-Chief.

She was as fearless, too, in the field as in the wards. When she visited the Crimea, she went out to look at the trenches—to the great alarm of a sentry, who tried to stop her. "My dear young man," she said to him reassuringly, "more dead and wounded have passed through my hands than I hope you will ever see in the battle-field during the whole of your military career; believe me, I have no fear of death." And then M. Soyer, the cook who was with her, persuaded her to sit, for a moment, on a gun carriage, and introduced her to the company:

"Gentlemen, behold this amiable lady sitting fearlessly upon that terrible instrument of war! Behold the heroic daughter of England—the soldier's friend!" All present shouted "Bravo! Hurrah! hurrah! Long live the daughter of England!"

The cheers were heard even in Sebastopol. It is the only incident in Florence Nightingale's career in which there is a suggestion of *réclame;*

and the *réclame* assuredly was not of her seeking. Indeed, she positively shrank from advertisement, declining the Government's offer of a passage home on a man-of-war, but returning incognito through France as "Miss Smith." One cannot do better than quote *Punch's* tribute to her self-effacing modesty :

Then leave her to the quiet she has chosen ; she demands
No greeting from our brazen throats and vulgar, clapping hands.
Leave her to the still comfort the saints known that have striven.
What are our earthly honours ? Her honours are in heaven.

On earth her name is the greatest among the names of the women whom war has brought into prominence. She was the last woman to whom it would have occurred to try to transcend the limitations of her sex. Her aim, while keeping within those limitations, was to attain to absolute efficiency herself, and bring others as near as might be to her high standard. She was as efficient in her sphere as Todleben in his—vastly more efficient than Lord Raglan, or Saint-Arnaud, or Pelissier, or Canrobert. Her name and that of Jeanne d'Arc are the only two names in the whole history of woman's achievements in war which are quite secure of immortality.

EPILOGUE

It has already been explained that this book was not only planned, but written, at a time when England was at peace with all the world, and few Englishmen expected to see the peace disturbed. The accidents which prevented its appearance in times of peace had nothing to do with the political situation. Then, suddenly, the storm-cloud burst, making a further postponement of publication advisable, suggesting a certain amount of revision, and requiring that the work should be, as the publisher said, "brought up to date."

Theoretically, the author agreed with the proposal; practically, he found himself embarrassed by circumstances not under his control. At the beginning of the war he had been caught, as a tourist, in the Grand Duchy of Luxemburg; and he had been detained, for more than a year, first in a small village in that neutral country, and then in an internment camp in Germany. The conditions of his detention were more favourable to philosophical speculation than to the detailed study of current events. His opportunities of corresponding with England were severely

limited. The only newspapers which he was able to read were German newspapers; and there was a time when even these were withheld from prisoners of war. Consequently he returned to England grossly ignorant of many of the things which the historian of the war—especially of this particular aspect of the war—ought to know, and almost afraid to write on the subject lest, in his ignorance, he should do injustice by omitting to mention some distinguished achievement or some famous name. At all events, things being as they are, it seems proper for him to present this explanation before proceeding.

One generalisation, in any case, seems safe. Since the civilised peoples of the world were last at war, the education of women has made great strides, and their position has vastly improved; and this social transformation, effected in time of peace, has produced its results in time of war. More has been demanded from women in this war than in any previous one; they have volunteered to render more multifarious services; and they have rendered those services more efficiently. There has been no repetition of Sidney Herbert's experience in the Crimean War, when the search for an efficient woman appears to have been only a little less difficult than the search of Diogenes for an honest man. If efficient women have not been quite as numerous as devoted women—for efficiency is always rarer than devotion—they

have, at all events, been discovered in astonishing abundance; and that not in one field of labour only, but in many.

Nursing, of course, has always been regarded as "woman's sphere"; and, for a long time, it was regarded as the only sphere connected with war in which she was qualified to shine. She might go to the hospitals and nurse, or she might stay at home and make the bandages: that was the alternative of old; the adoption of any third course was abnormal, and was esteemed unfeminine. If any conceptions of that kind, however, were still lingering when this war began, experience has long since destroyed them. Women have lately demonstrated that they can be useful in war in many other ways besides the mitigation of the horrors; that they can organise as well as work, and that they are eminently capable of many kinds of work in many spheres which man has hitherto thought of as exclusively his own.

The phenomenon has not been peculiar to any one of the countries engaged in the war, but has been common to them all. The Germans, no less than ourselves, have, as they would say, "mobilised" their women, whether they belonged to the idle or to the industrial classes, though they have made rather less use than we have of their intelligence, and rather more use of their muscles. The writer has not only seen crowds of German nurses in neat uniforms awaiting the arrival of the wounded at the

railway stations ; he has also seen women working as plate-layers on the railway at Spandau, and cleaning the streets and driving the tram-cars in Berlin. On more than one occasion a woman drove a tram, by inadvertence, into the River Spree, and caused considerable loss of life.

The inference could, no doubt, reasonably be drawn that woman's war work has been less efficient in Germany than here ; and there are also incidents which indicate that it has been more capricious. A case of the kind occurred at Düsseldorf, when a military doctor, at a public meeting, called for volunteers to help in the hospitals. The volunteers were numerous enough ; but lady after lady hedged her offer with a qualification, saying that she was willing to be a nurse on condition that she should only be required to nurse officers. The doctor naturally turned them out of the hall with winged words ; but one is glad to feel that no such incident would have been possible in any of the Allied Countries. Its occurrence, at any rate, places one in closer sympathy than ever with those ladies of Luxemburg, who, when the Germans asked them to volunteer their services for Red Cross work, stipulated that they should only be asked to render assistance to French, English, and Belgian prisoners, and that the German wounded should continue to be attended by German nurses.

These remarks, however, are of the nature of

a digression. Space is limited, and is due to the record of individual achievements : due, in the first instance, to the women who have actually borne arms and served in the ranks during the present war. There have been such women in both the Russian and the Austro-Hungarian armies—no fewer than twenty of them in the Voluntary Ukraine Legion alone ; and the *Evening Standard* lately furnished particulars of the exploits of a Miss Helen Ruz of that corps—the daughter of a high railway official at Czernowitz, and a student, when the war broke out, at the Vienna Commercial Academy. This is what the *Evening Standard* gathered about her from a Hungarian correspondent :

" The Legion went to the front, and after two weeks Miss Ruz was appointed corporal. She went through the whole Galician campaign, in the worst places of the Carpathian Mountains, lost her father, two brothers, and her *fiancé*, gained two medals, was transferred to the Uhlans, had two ribs broken by a shrapnel splinter, and is now impatiently awaiting her complete recovery to rejoin. She is now being carefully nursed in a pretty, small room of the hospital, which is being directed by one of the army lady doctors. . . . The nerves of that nineteen-year-old girl have completely withstood the manifold shocks of one of the bloodiest and most exacting campaigns of history, and she is commissioned for commissioned rank."

So much for the Amazons in the ranks of the enemy. Our information about the Amazons who have fought for Russia may be borrowed from M. Ludovic Naudeau, the Petrograd correspondent of *Le Journal*. The Russian military regulations, M. Naudeau tells us, forbid the enlistment of women; but those rules have frequently been honoured in the breach, the pioneer being Mlle Apollovna Isoltsev, who was accepted as a volunteer in a regiment commanded by her father:

"In the midst of the battle," M. Naudeau writes, "the colonel was mortally wounded and was left lying in a burning cottage. Apollovna dashed through the flames, discovered her father's body, and carried it, under a storm of shot and shell, back into the Russian lines."

Very similar was the feat performed by Mlle Maria Bieloverskaia, who, seeing the major of her battalion fall, severely wounded, rushed to his assistance, and carried him out of the first line to a place of comparative safety. For this service she was awarded the Cross of St. George, of the fourth class, and she was shortly afterwards promoted to the third class of the same order for discovering a telephone which the enemy had concealed in a loft and was using for the purposes of the Intelligence Department. Other heroines of whom M. Naudeau speaks are Mlles Kokovtseva and Olga Serguievna Schidlowskaia.

"Mlle Kokovtseva has also won the Cross of St. George. Enlisting as a volunteer in a Cossack regiment at the beginning of the war, she has taken part in the most daring reconnaissances, and has been once severely wounded.

"Mlle Olga Serguievna Schidlowskaia belongs to a family of soldiers. Her elder brother, Paul Schidlowsky, of the 102nd regiment, was killed at Soldau early in the war, and her other brother, Alexander, was severely wounded. Olga herself obtained leave from headquarters to enlist in the 4th Hussars, the regiment in which another heroine, Alexandra Dourova, fought against Napoleon in 1812 as a cornet. With close-cropped hair, she serves as Oleg Schidlowsky."

In conclusion, M. Naudeau tells the story of a work-woman, Maria Limareva, who was recently summoned in the Russian equivalent of our County Court for failing to pay the hire of her sewing-machine :

"What have you to say?" asked the Judge.

"Nothing, except it be that I am unable to pay, as I was wounded a short time ago, fighting against the Austrians. Here are my papers."

"On my word," exclaimed the Judge, after scanning the documents, "she speaks the truth. Maria Limareva is a wounded soldier."

"In that case," said the plaintiff, "I wish to withdraw the summons."

The stories recall the unique days of the French Revolution; and it seems very appropriate that the Demoiselles Fernig should have found their most notable disciples among the women of France's principal Ally, in a war which has called forth just the same spirit of popular enthusiasm as the wars waged on behalf of the Gospel of the Rights of Man. Still, such feats of arms, admirable as one finds them, do not represent the characteristic war work of the women of our time. The distinctive notes have been, rather, the marvellous adaptability displayed by modern women in conditions to which no experience had accustomed them, and the immense numbers in which they have been found prepared to face both peril and hardship, without a suspicion of theatricality, as things which were all in the day's work.

Where so many have done so well, and so much as a matter of course, one is almost ashamed to praise, lest eulogy should appear to imply surprise, akin to that expressed by an officer of Uhlans who questioned an English nurse whom he found wandering among the battle-fields of Belgium, and was startled into saying, "Really! really! really! You English women are wonderful." Examples, in any case, are better than eulogies; and it will suffice to quote, almost at random, a few extracts from the newspapers which have printed the stories of women—mostly doctors and

nurses—who went through the Serbian campaign. There is the story, for instance, of Sister Janet Middleton of Middlesbrough, told by her to a contributor to *Lloyd's Weekly News*. She was on field ambulance duty at Markovatz when the overwhelming Bulgar-Boche advance necessitated that flight through Albania which is almost comparable to the British flight from the Afghans through the Khyber Pass :

" We slept in our sleeping-bags on waterproof sheets on the earth, and when we awoke in the morning our blankets were covered with white frost. We dressed our wounded and then sat on our luggage, waiting for the order to depart. Suddenly there was a whizz overhead. We looked up, and there was an enemy aeroplane. Our little party consisted of seven nurses and two Sisters, and it was something of a task to look after our wounded with bombs dropping round. But we could not afford to lose our heads—even if we had felt unnerved. One man and three oxen were killed close to us, and several people were wounded; but there was work to be done, since our orders had not come, and we simply went on with it. . . .

" I shall never forget the day on which we started. It began to snow. We hoped we should get out of it, but as the hours passed a terrific blizzard came on. Walking was agony. We had packed our goods on the ponies; one of them was in my charge. Every now and

then the poor thing would slip on the rough road, the pack would fall off, and I would have to refasten it. We were climbing mountain ground, the summits of which reached 7,000 ft. above sea-level. The road was little more than a narrow path, holding one at a time. On one side was a deep precipice over which one of our ponies fell. In one day I counted six dead horses on the wayside. Along this winding hill-path we had to climb. Our feet were sore and frost-bitten, there was no protection from the blinding snow. We could only go a step or two at a time, feeling our way, clutching at the barren grass on the roadside, lest we fell. . . .

"Eventually we got across the lake, and then began another trek to the coast side. There we had to wait six days for a boat. We had practically no food. Foodships were expected daily, but we learnt that two had been sunk by the Austrians, and on the shores the tide washed up a great side of fat bacon. Dirty and smelly as it was, we were glad of it. . . . At last an Italian boat came in, which agreed to take us to Brindisi. It was a very light craft, and it was crammed with refugees who were violently ill most of the time. . . . I feel as if I needed a long rest, I am so physically done up."

Then there is Miss Linton's story, given in the *Standard* :

"We had no medicines, and had to dry our clothes by the fires of sticks which we made when we halted. We once walked twenty-five miles in one day, from Prizrend to Jaconitza; but our usual average was about twelve miles. Bombs flung from aeroplanes fell very near us at Scutari. We saw many bodies of men who had died of starvation and exhaustion lying by the roadside. We wore out the top-boots and shoes we started with, and were forced to buy new ones whenever we had a chance, whatever their quality, and however badly they fitted. Miss Bell burned up a pair of top-boots by putting them too near the fire to thaw the ice on them. The bread and meat you put in your pocket froze hard."

Such are typical stories of the hardships so stubbornly and modestly endured in the good cause; but there is still something needed to complete the picture—the nature of the fear inspired by what was known of the disposition and methods of the pursuing foe. In the wars waged among civilised races, women—above all, the women who tend the wounded—are safe from molestation; but, when the German is the enemy, that is not the case. Doubtless there are chivalrous men among the Germans—one meets such a man, now and again, even in the official reports on the atrocities perpetrated in Belgium; but chivalry is the exception, not the rule, and the exercise of it has often been a

violation of military discipline. The normal German officer goes forth to war with the mark of the beast on his forehead, and the lust of cruelty in his heart. The higher his rank, the less is he to be trusted, and the more likely is he to pass the word for cold-blooded and calculated "frightfulness." Many things have been done in the course of this war which brand the race with the stigma of everlasting ignominy; and there is one crime which will be remembered against them as long as the crime of Pontius Pilate—the judicial murder of Edith Cavell.

The story is so well known that the repetition of all the details would be superfluous. All that Edith Cavell had done, on the showing of her accusers, was to assist Belgians to leave their country in contravention of a German order; there was practically no evidence against her, even on that charge, except her own frank confession. Her whole life had previously been devoted to the tending of the sick; during the war German soldiers, no less than others, had profited from her ministrations. Never before in the whole history of warfare among civilised peoples has such a trivial offence committed by such a woman been visited with the death penalty; but Edith Cavell was not in the hands of civilised men—she was in the hands of Germans. How far remote are the methods of German soldiers from those of civilised mankind is shown even in the story of

her arrest, as told by Mr. W. T. Hill in his little book, *The Martyrdom of Nurse Cavell* :

"Early in the evening of August 5 a loud knock came to the door of Nurse Cavell's hospital in the Rue de la Culture. Five heavily booted German soldiers and a corporal stood outside with a police officer. At that moment the nurse was changing the bandages of a wounded German. The soldiers broke open the door with the butt-ends of their rifles, and rushed into the ward. At a sign from the police officer the corporal seized Miss Cavell roughly. He tore out of her hand the lint with which she was about to bandage the wounded man, and began to drag her away. The Englishwoman, astonished but calm, asked for an explanation. The answer was a cuff."

It was a pretty beginning ; and the rest was quite in keeping with it. The trial was not a fair one. The prisoner was not allowed to see the legal adviser who would have warned her to be cautious in her admissions, and she was tricked into the admission required to support the capital charge. From her lips, and from that source alone, her judges got the proof that the men whom she had helped to cross the Dutch frontier had actually reached a country at war with Germany ; and, after that statement had been elicited, her doom was sealed. The Public Prosecutor pressed for sentence of death ; the

Court, as a matter of course, accorded it. For the rest, the executioners acted on the murderer's motto :

> If, when 'twere done, 'twere well done, then 'twere well
> It were done quickly.

They knew that what they were about to do was shameful. Being ashamed, they were afraid, and therefore they made haste. They doubted their courage to go on in the face of the indignation which they knew that their sentence would arouse among the humane and chivalrous throughout the world ; and therefore they lied as to their intentions, in order that that indignation might be confronted with an accomplished fact. They announced, that is to say, that the execution would be delayed for a few days, whereas they knew that it was their intention to carry it out immediately, at the dead of night ; and it is recorded against them in the official report of the American Legation to the British Foreign Office that they deliberately blocked the path of mercy with a barricade of lies.

It also stands recorded against them that the American Legation, and the Spanish Legation, believed that they lied, and acted upon that assumption. The story of the action which the Legations took may be borrowed from the narrative contained in the *Field's* Supplement on " The Crimes of the German Army " :

" Mr. Brand Whitlock, the American Minister,

who had been indefatigable in Miss Cavell's cause, was himself too ill to go out; but he gave instructions to Mr. Hugh Gibson, Secretary to the Legation. Mr. Gibson, accompanied by M. de Laval, hastened first to find the Spanish Minister, the Marquis de Villalobar; and the three went on a desperate errand of mercy, to find Baron von der Lancken. They took with them a note addressed by Mr. Brand Whitlock to Baron von der Lancken, and a plea for clemency addressed to the Governor-General, Baron von Bissing. . . .

"They had to wait some time to see Baron von der Lancken, who was absent for the evening with all his staff; but they sent a messenger to him, and he returned with two other officials. He was told their mission, and he read Mr. Whitlock's letter aloud. His response was to express his disbelief that sentence had been passed; and he demanded the source of the information. He continued to try to put his interlocutors off, but finally was prevailed upon to telephone to the Presiding Judge of the Court-martial. He was then obliged to admit that sentence had been passed, and that the sentence would be carried out before morning.

"Mr. Gibson, M. de Laval, the Marquis de Villalobar pleaded for clemency; at any rate, for delay; they exhausted every plea, every reason.

"Baron von der Lancken replied that the

Military Governor was the supreme authority; but appeal from his decision could be carried only to the Emperor. He added that the Military Governor had discretionary powers to accept or to refuse acceptance to a plea for clemency. . . . After some discussion, he agreed to call up the Military Governor on the telephone and learn whether he had already ratified the sentence, and whether there was any chance of clemency.

"He returned in half an hour, and said he had conferred personally with Baron von Bissing, who said that he had deliberated on the case, and that he considered the infliction of the death-penalty imperative. He therefore declined to accept Mr. Brand Whitlock's appeal for clemency, or any representation in regard to the matter."

So, the murder having been resolved upon, it was committed at the dead of night. The Rev. H. S. T. Gahan, the British chaplain at Brussels, had already been admitted to offer the last consolations of religion to the victim of the murder, at the time when Von der Lancken, the liar, was denying that sentence had been passed. This is his story of her last hours:

"To my astonishment and relief, I found my friend perfectly calm and resigned. But this could not lessen the tenderness and intensity of feeling on either part during that last interview of almost an hour.

"Her first words to me were upon a matter concerning herself personally, but the solemn asseveration which accompanied them was made expressedly in the light of God and eternity. She then added that she wished all her friends to know that she willingly gave her life for her country, and said: 'I have no fear nor shrinking; I have seen death so often that it is not strange or fearful to me.' She further said: 'I thank God for this ten weeks' quiet before the end. Life has always been hurried and full of difficulty. This time of rest has been a great mercy. They have all been very kind to me here. But this I would say, standing as I do in view of God and eternity: I realise that patriotism is not enough. I must have no hatred or bitterness towards any one.'

"We partook of the Holy Communion together, and she received the Gospel message of consolation with all her heart. At the close of the little service, I began to repeat the words, 'Abide with Me,' and she joined softly in the end."

So the foul deed was done; and the civilised world raised a cry of "Shame!" which will re-echo down the ages, long after the German Empire has been ground to dust; and the German press, for a moment staggered and silent, presently recovered itself and spoke out with that callous vulgarity which is of the essence of the German mind. This, for instance, is how the Berlin *Lokalanzeiger* spoke:

"The hypocritical blubbering and hysterical howling that still go on in the English Press over the Cavell affair make us downright sick. The immeasurable depth of this true English cant is proved by the fact that in London they are at heart only too glad at the occurrence, which has afforded the military authorities a splendid instrument for reviving the waning recruiting activities. To the British War Office the dead woman is worth a score of recruiting sergeants: she is also much cheaper to employ. She costs no money, but only a liberal output of those crocodile tears which John Bull's eyes are ever ready to shed at a moment's notice. A nation like the British, the pages of whose history are besmirched with dirty deeds, incurs the loathing of the human race from now to all eternity when it dares to point the finger of scorn and indignation at German officers who only did their duty in carrying out the sentence pronounced upon a guilty woman."

There is nothing to be said except, *Crimine ab uno disce omnes*. The German Press poured out such apologies, together with others still more degraded and bestial, for days. Reading them, one feels as if a searchlight had been thrown upon the place in which the German soul should be, and only a speck of dirt had been found there. And, if the Germans flatter themselves that it is only in England that their crime has met with contemptuous execration,

then let them consider the words in which M. Painlevé denounced it, at the ceremony arranged by the League of the Rights of Man, in the presence of the President of the Republic and the Ambassadors of the Allied Powers :

" Germany has neither accused nor excused herself. Her lawyers are still quibbling over the murdered nurse's so-called trial. It passes their comprehension that the legality of this murder increases its terror.

" What is intolerable precisely is that her trial and execution conformed with German justice. So long as Germany does not profoundly feel the shame and remorse of this crime no peace will be possible between Germany and humanity. Even were an absurd and impossible hypothesis to come true, and violence and iniquity to triumph over justice and right, there is not a man worthy of the name who would not prefer death with Miss Cavell to victory with her murderers.

" But it is to our victory, and not to defeat, that those thousands of young Englishmen are marching, who have enlisted to wreak vengeance upon the German people for this murder. . . . The Germans shot the frail nurse in vain. Little English nurse, you have not been vanquished ; you are victorious for all time. At this great commemoration which anticipates history, before crowds of French people come to celebrate you, we greet in you the

herald of better humanity and triumphant justice."

And on those two words "murder" and "justice" we must continue to insist when the hour comes. Murder has been done, and therefore justice must be done. Von Bissing and the others must understand that, henceforward, whether they fight or administer, they do so with ropes round their necks, that we shall not temper justice, any more than they tempered injustice, with mercy, and that, unless their own hands should rob the executioner of his due, their fate is fixed, and they will be swung ignominiously from the gallows into the presence of the Judge of all the earth.

THE END

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